MIGRATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS: RETURN MIGRANTS TO PUERTO RICO

By

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

MIGRATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS:
RETURN MIGRANTS TO PUERTO RICO

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This study evaluates the impact of migration and return migration on households in Puerto Rico. Interviews carried out in the city of Mayaguez generated data on the socioeconomic characteristics of return migrant heads of household and the domestic units to which they belong. The sample included return migrants with children enrolled in school in Puerto Rico and a comparable sample of nonmigrant households. The life histories of three families guided the formulation of the questionnaire. For migrants, the questionnaire gathered quantitative and qualitative information regarding three stages of the migration process: pre-migration, residence abroad, and the return migrant situation on the island.

Results show that economic reasons motivated the migration of Puerto Ricans to New York. However, our data question the importance of economic factors as the most

important explanation of return migration. The socio-economic profile of respondents in the sample indicate that approximately one third of return migrant households were headed by a female. Almost half of them reported that change in marital status motivated their return to Puerto Rico. Returnees also expressed fear of violence in New York and health problems as the main reason for returning.

Return migrants have slightly lower annual family incomes compared to nonmigrants. Female-headed households are the most disadvantaged in Puerto Rico. Data on the children of return migrants reared in New York also document the difficulties many children confront in the school system in Puerto Rico.

Additional findings show returnees accumulated few resources during the migration period. Most arrived in Puerto Rico hoping that relatives would help them until they relocated in Mayaguez. These results provide little evidence that return migration has a positive socioeconomic impact on Mayaguez, or on Puerto Rico.

We conclude that return migrants in this study belong to a population bypassed by the development process in Puerto Rico. After their return, migrants found that the same industrial system that motivated their emigration from the island provided equally limited opportunities when they returned home. Given Puerto Rico's present economic situation, the future of other migrants that intend to return is uncertain.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Puerto Rico has undergone substantial demographic change during this century. The island's population size and structure have been affected by the migratory movements that began in the 1940s, and that continue today. Hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans migrated in the 1950's (more than 500,000) and in the 1960's (about 200,000), and settled in the United States, particularly New York City. After 1965, a reverse migration trend assumed increasing importance.

Return migration is important for Puerto Rico for a number of reasons. First, the migration flow adds inhabitants to the already heavily populated island. Second, Puerto Rico is having difficulties absorbing its local labor supply. Third, the influx of population entails social adjustments and requires the provision of new service facilities. Special school programs for the so-called "Newyoricans," housing, and the expansion of public services are examples of such services.

Mayaguez, the site of this study, is located in the west coast of the island. This municipality has a land area of 77 square miles (200 square kilometers) and, according to the 1980 census, a population of 96,193. Mayaguez used to

be the third largest municipality in Puerto Rico. However, as of the 1970 census, Mayaguez registered one of the lowest changes in population (2.4%) in Puerto Rico. Between 1970 and 1980 the population increased by 12% (United States Census Bureau, 1980). Even though Mayaguez is the seventh largest municipality in terms of the size of its population, it continues to be the largest and most predominant urban center in the western region of the island.

This research focuses on the impact of migration and the return on the individual migrant and the migrant household, as well as on the receiving community. Relying on data derived from a survey of 120 households, 70 return migrants and 50 nonmigrants, this study analyzes a number of variables. The implications of migration for social mobility will be examined by analyzing achievement over time in terms of education, skills, occupation and material possessions such as capital and property. Finally, the adjustment of returnees and their families will be explored in terms of satisfactions derived from living in Puerto Rico and the strategies devised in adjusting to the new environment. Unlike other studies, we will focus attention on the return migrant family in the childrearing stage.

This research contributes to the understanding of migration and its consequences. From a practical stand-

point, it provides a source of information on some of the characteristics of this segment of the population in Puerto Rico. This study also allows an understanding of the impact of migration on individuals and their families in order to formulate policies to deal with return migrants to Puerto Rico. To my knowledge, this study is the first to deal with the reintegration of returnees into Puerto Rican society.

Plan of this Work

This chapter is followed by an identification of the the setting. Historical aspects of Puerto Rico are presented as background information. Relevant literature from which this work originated and which supports it, is reviewed in Chapter II. Chapter III specifies the objectives of this study, sources of information and methodological considerations relevant to this research.

Chapter IV provides a socieconomic profile of migrants during two stages of the migration process, namely, pre-migration and while residing in the United States. In addition, it includes return migrants' perceptions of the process of migration, including the return.

A descriptive analysis of the Puerto Rican return migrants and their household are presented in Chapter V. The return migrant sample is compared to a sample of nonmigrants in order to examine the impact of migration and

return migration on the return migrants' socioeconomic characteristics. Also, income differentials and the relationship between income and selected socioeconomic variables are statistically analyzed. Chapter VI attempts to assess the benefits of migration for the individual and the receiving community after the return. Chapter VII presents a summary of the findings of this study.

Puerto Rico

The territory of Puerto Rico has 3,435 square miles and 3.2 million inhabitants. Puerto Rico is a relatively small island with a large population, a shortage of natural resources and a precarious agricultural base. A brief review of the major developments in Puerto Rico's history is relevant to an interpretation of the major sociodemographic phenomena that have occurred during the present century.

Political Aspects

After four centuries of Spanish occupation, and as a result of the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was annexed by the United States under the Treaty of Paris of 1898. The Foraker Act of 1900 established a popularly elected lower house with a nominated executive council. Although at least five members of the house had to be Puerto Rican-born, the control of the island's government remained in the hands of U.S. officials nominated by the President of the United States.

In 1917, the Jones Act recognized Puerto Rico as a territory of the United States and granted Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship. This act did not offer autonomy to the island and, even though a legislature was established, the principal executive officers were still appointed by the President of the United States. Also, Puerto Ricans were not eligible to vote in U.S. Congressional elections. At the same time taxes were not levied on the population. Puerto Rico was relieved of the costs of its defense but its citizens were liable for military service.

The Popular Party, organized by the Puerto Rican Luis Munoz Marin, won the election of 1941. Yet, it was not until 1949 that a Puerto Rican was elected governor, and that the idea of a "commonwealth" came about. The "commonwealth" status seemed economically attractive to many but the Spanish term "Estado Libre Asociado" was ambiguous. Puerto Rico was not free in the sense of sovereign status, and the word "associated" did not accurately describe the existing relationship between island and mainland.

Opposition parties in Puerto Rico believed that Munoz's ideas of "commonwealth" would not survive. The leading opposition party argued that Puerto Ricans did not have full rights of citizenship because they could not participate in presidential or congressional elections.

However, Puerto Ricans served in the U.S. Armed Forces. On the basis of these contentions statehood status was sought for Puerto Rico. The Independence Party, on the other hand, advocated complete separation from the United States, claiming that the island had remained little more than a colony. Separatists argued against U.S. business interests in Puerto Rico which would, according to them, obliterate its Spanish inheritance (Mitchell, 1967). Culture and nationalism were the major issues of the Independence Party.

In 1967 a plebiscite was held on the status of Puerto Rico. The "commonwealth" status was ratified but the status dilemma remained, causing continuous dissention even within political parties. The three major parties divided and new parties emerged. By 1980 there were a total of seven political parties presenting candidates in that year's election.

Socioeconomic Aspects

Puerto Rico's trade was limited to Spain during most of the 19th century. By the end of Spanish rule, Spain was purchasing one quarter of the island's exports, and Cuba nearly another quarter. United States, France, and Germany each accounted for 10%. Coffee was the leading export, followed by sugar.

The economy was mainly one of subsistence. Large sugar and coffee estates were administered by a small class of

wealthy landowners. Most of the population consisted of peasant landowners (jibaros) located in the mountain rural areas, and laborers (jornaleros) on the sugar plantations of the coastal lowlands. The remaining segments consisted of the Spanish military and civil bureaucracy, as well as merchants and artisans.

Following the 1898 U.S. annexation, Puerto Rico experienced economic development over a relatively short period of time. San Juan, Ponce, and Mayaguez became main centers of commerce and export trade. A dependent trade relationship developed which established a mercantile tariff policy that limited Puerto Rico to buying and selling in the U.S. market. The sugar cartel of the early 20th century (Mass, 1977) established a monoculture system. The coffee industry, as well as other agricultural crops such as tobacco and citrus, were left unprotected and without a market. The single crop export economy prevented trade agreements with other Latin American or any other nation.

After the 1930 depression, a series of reforms were initiated. The Agrarian Reform of 1941 established a 500-acre limit on land ownership. In 1946 a program of Industrial Development, the so called "Operation Bootstrap," was initiated under the Commonwealth Economic Development Administration (FOMENTO). A special tax arrangement was

devised in order to encourage foreign private capital to invest in industrial production on the island.

These transformations not only affected agricultural production, but also had an impact on peasant life and on social structure. Income per capita increased dramatically from $121 in 1940 to $585 in 1960, reaching $900 in 1965 (Mitchell, 1967 : 110). A high level of mechanization was introduced, a factor that inhibited the development of a small-farmer class in sugar areas given, the large investments of capital needed for the existing level of mechanization. The nonagricultural sector gained precedence over the agricultural one. These changes brought about a shift of labor from agricultural to nonagricultural occupations. Also, the number of women in the labor force increased. Women were employed by industry; the home neddlework industry experienced a decline (Safa, 1984).

Cohen (1970) regards the Puerto Rican experience a "development paradox." The development efforts produced a progressive and relatively high-income economy. Industrial dispersion was encouraged by offering longer tax exemptions to those industries investing in less developed regions of the island. Nevertheless, unemployment continued. The volume of job opportunities created was not sufficient to reduce the level of unemployment. The exodus of labor from

the agricultural sector exacerbated the employment situation.

Labor shortages have affected agricultural production in Puerto Rico. From an annual yield of over a million tons in the early 1960s, sugar production dropped to 477,000 tons in 1969. In 1970, Puerto Rico was barely able to meet a third of the United States quota of 1.3 million tons.

By 1956 most employment activity in Puerto Rico involved factory work. Many of the new job opportunities went to female workers in industries such as textiles, electronic assembly, and shoe manufacturing. The wage difference was such that those willing to do agricultural work were no longer attracted to it. Many male workers simply dropped out of the labor market (Cohen, 1970 : 6) or migrated. Since factory jobs provided year round employment and favored female workers, women became more important breadwinners in the family than men with only seasonal agricultural employment.

Demographic Aspects

The population of Puerto Rico increased 2.8 times between the years 1899 and 1970. Table 1.1 shows that the rate of population growth steadily increased until 1940, and then declined during the 1950-60 period to the lowest rate of 0.6%. Since 1960 it began to increase again to a high of 2.7. After 1975, the growth fell to 1.7 a year.

Table 1.1 Population Growth: Puerto Rico, 1899 to 1980.

Year	Population (in thousands)	Annual Growth Rate (Percent)
1899	953	---
1910	1,118	1.5
1920	1,300	1.6
1930	1,543	1.7
1940	1,869	1.9
1950	2,211	1.7
1960	2,350	0.6
1970	2,713	1.4
1975	3,100	2.7
1980	3,197	1.7

The major demographic changes that occurred between 1899 and 1940 can be explained by the levels of fertility and mortality. During that period mortality rates rapidly declined from 25.3 to 19.6 deaths per one thousand inhabitants (Table 1.2), while the rates of fertility experienced slow declines, from 40.5 to 39.6.

Table 1.2 Fertility Rates and Natural Population Growth, Puerto Rico: 1900-1909 to 1960-79.

Period	Fertility Rate	Mortality Rate	Natural Growth
1900-09	40.5	25.3	15.2
1910-19	40.4	24.0	16.4
1920-29	39.3	22.1	17.2
1930-39	39.6	19.6	20.0
1949-49	40.7	14.5	26.2
1950-59	35.0	8.0	27.0
1960-69	29.4	6.8	22.6
1970-79	23.7	6.4	17.0

The decline in population growth after 1950 was due in part to reductions in levels of fertility and, more important, to the migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States. Myers (1967 : 426) points out that without the loss attributed to migration the island's population would have increased by 27.5%. That figure excludes the births that would have occurred to migrants if they had remained in Puerto Rico.

The significance of migration in the demographic changes of Puerto Rico began in the 1950s. Table 1.3 shows that the peak net migration (237,000 persons) to the United States was in the 1950-54 period. Net migration was always positive until the 1970-80 period.

Table 1.3 Puerto Rico's Net Emigration from 1900 to 1980.

Period	Net Emigration
1900-09	2,000
1910-19	11,000
1920-29	42,000
1930-39	18,000
1940-44	16,000
1945-49	135,000
1950-54	237,000
1955-59	193,000
1960-64	58,000
1965-69	87,000
1970-74	-120,000*
1975-80	- 16,292*

*Net immigration.

Migration is associated with the economic changes in the island as well as in mainland. During periods of recessions in the United States the rate of migration from Puerto Rico declines and some return migration occurs (Lopez, 1980). In the 1930s, migration considerably declined and many Puerto Ricans returned to the island due to the prevailing conditions in the United States economy. Similarly, there was a slowdown in migration during the Second World War and since 1965.

According to the censuses, 34,000 individuals returned to Puerto Rico between 1955 and 1960, 225,000 between 1965 and 1970, and 144,506 during the 1970 decade. Due to the present economic situation in the United States, it is expected that the return movement will continue. However, given the economic situation in the island, it is uncertain that return migrants will stay in Puerto Rico.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a general agreement in the migration literature that differences in social and economic development lead to the movement of people within and between nations. Most studies in this field have devised sets of "push" and "pull" factors to which migrants are presumed to respond (Lee, 1966). The push factors most frequently reported are population pressure, land scarcity, unemployment and underemployment (Evans and James, 1979; Masnick, 1968). Commonly cited pull factors include wage differentials, other economic advantages, social benefits, and the expectation of upward social mobility (Rogers, 1968).

There are divergencies in explaining individual responses to the circumstances that motivate migration, and with regard to the adjustment or adaptation of the migrants at the place of destination. Few studies deal with return migration. Diverse conceptions of the nature of migration, and difficulties stemming from the sources of data, condition the lines of inquiry on this topic and pose problems in developing a systematic approach to the study of migration (Mangalam and Schwarzweller, 1968).

Theoretical Frameworks in the Study of Migration and Return Migration

A review of the available literature shows that most approaches to migration fall into one of three categories. Labor mobility studies, generally developed by economists focus on labor reallocation in response to market forces (Rothenberg, 1977; Vanderkamp, 1971). Wage is the price of labor, and labor migration is seen a direct response to the average real-wage differential between areas. The volume of migration is directly proportional to differences in wage levels. Interpreted as a special case of the microeconomic theory of consumer choice, the underlying hypothesis derived from this framework is that the redistribution of population among regions (within a country and between nations) is the result of the perception by individual migrants (net of cost) of the differences in economic opportunities between places. It is implied that individuals are rational and, as such, they make decisions in terms of utility maximation.

A second approach deals with migration in terms of the selectivity of migrants. Attempts are made to determine characteristics that differentiate migrants from nonmigrants. These include economic background, racial and ethnic features, educational attainment, occupational level, life cycle stage, etc. (Beshers and Nishiura, 1961; Leslie

and Richardson, 1961). In this type of research, the concern is shifted from the context in which migration occurs to the identification of who the migrants are.

A third category of research incorporates the traditionally "push-pull" studies noted above. A group of studies takes into consideration characteristics of both the sending and the receiving areas. Unlike the labor mobility studies, however, the perspective does not insist that the factors involved in migration be evaluated in solely economic terms. The "push-pull" approach provides an opportunity for greater complexity of explanations. The "push-pull" approach and the microeconomic framework share basic premises. Both concentrate on the decision-making process of the prospective migrant. The migrant is viewed as evaluating alternative prospects and making a rational decision on the basis of the available information.

Critics of the microeconomic framework point out that it fails to grasp the underlying causes and consequences of migration. By concentrating on the behavior of individual actors, little attention is given to the macroeconomic conditions that compel the decision to move (Wood, 1981 : 8). Thus, the volume of migration from the Third World to developed countries is explained by individual cost/benefit decision overlooking the development strategies of these

countries which have accentuated regional imbalances (Amin, 1974; Singer, 1981). Under these circumstances, the notion that free market forces operate to achieve an optimal distribution of the population seems unreal. The increasing socioeconomic and demographic distortion observed in many Third World countries question the microeconomic argument (Wood, 1982).

In order to deal with the limitation of applying the available frameworks to the Third World, Latin American social scientists approach the study of population movements from a historical-structural perspective. Emphasis is given to the class structure in the dynamic context of history (Wood, 1982). According to this perspective, the mobility of labor at a particular historical moment is conceptualized as an integral part of the structural transformations at the broader societal level. The explanation of migration as individual behavior is considered an overly narrow approach that omits the broader context within which migration occurs.

The microeconomic analysis also overlooks household behavior in responding to structural change. According to Wood (1982), population movements in rural Latin America can be better explained by analyzing household behavior in coping with changes in the agrarian structure. The strategy

devised at the household level include shifts in the division of labor by sex or in patterns of consumption, adjustments in fertility and mortality, engagement in other economic activities, as well as the temporary or seasonal migration. This perspective suggests that it is necessary to construct a framework that takes into consideration the phenomena of migration at multiple levels of analysis.

Dependency theorists argue that advanced capitalist societies maintain their position of power by exploiting peripheral or satellite societies (see Chilcote, 1974, for a review of the dependency literature). Thus, the circumstances under which migration occurs is, in most respects, a consequence of the core-periphery (or metropolis-satellite) relationship at the international and intranational levels. As such, labor migration is controlled according to the needs for labor of the more developed societies. The "brain drain," or flow of professionals from peripheral to core societies, is a situation that can also be explained according to the advocates of the dependency paradigm, by the imbalances and the condition and dependency of poor nations (Portes, 1976).

Women in Migration

The bulk of migration literature concentrates on men's labor force participation and the problems that they

confront as migrants. Few studies deal with women, and much less is said about the return migrant women. In part this is due to the fact that, at the international level, most migrants are men, with some exceptions. Since 1930, with variations over time, more than half of all immigrants to the United States have been female (Houstoun, et al., 1984). This is mainly due to family unification policies which allow immediate relatives of U.S. citizens to enter the country. Among these immigrants are postwar flows of wives and children of U.S. serviceman. About two-thirds of the immigration to the United States after World War I consisted of women and children. Also, rural to urban migration within countries in Latin America is characterized by a high proportion of females, mostly from the lower classes.

Researchers generally agree that female migrants have been neglected by research and policy makers. Morokvasic (1984 : 899) criticizes the fact that women have been represented in the migration literature in a stereotypical manner, as "passive dependents." Whether women work in a factory or as seamstress at home, they have been assigned the status of dependent family members. Their role of housewife-mother implies that they are subsidiary workers and that their wages as complementary income only.

Women migrate for marriage purposes, or to follow their husbands. This, according to Morokvasic (1984), can be or may become migration for economic reasons. Women may join the husband as a joint strategy to improve their economic situation. Independent migration patterns of women have been overlooked. Female migration may occur for economic and noneconomic factors.

Few studies deal with the migration of women as strategies for survival and mobility. Trager (1984) found that urban migration in the Phillippines is increasingly female dominated. The economic strategies of rural families play an important role in migration. Young, single women migrate from rural areas in order to help the family with income and other resources. Their remittances can be essential to the support of the rest of the family. It has been noted that daughters are usually "more willing and faithful than sons in sharing their savings with the family" (cited in Trager, 1984 : 1274). Women also migrate to achieve upward mobility through job opportunites and better education. Women with limited access to resources in their place of origin may be obliged to migrate. Trager urges the study of family strategies that lead to patterns of women migration.

Noneconomic factors in a country or society may have a sex-selective impact on emigration. It has been observed that certain categories of women seem more mobile than others. Marginalized women in a given society may be under pressure to leave. This may be the case of widows and divorcees.

There is a tendency for migrant women to adapt more quickly to the new environment if they work (Pessar, 1984). As rural women move from a traditional setting to an urban context, their attitudes are said to change. Their participation in the labor force makes them more independent, and they assume greater power in the household's decision-making process. Castles and Kosack (1973) assert that European women demand emancipation from their traditional subordinate role with the acquisition of some economic independency. Pessar's (1984) study of 55 Dominican immigrant families and 16 female garment workers observed that most migrant households moved away from patriarchal relations and values towards more egalitarian allocation of authority and of household tasks. Women improved their status in the household as work heightened their self-esteem as wives and mothers. Their income contribution in the household also provided them greater participation in the household decision-making. Pessar stressed that employment

did not provide women with a new status that challenged or subordinated their primary identities as wives and mothers. On the contrary, migration and the experience of employment and residence in the United States allowed women to redefine their roles as wives and mothers in a more satisfying manner than before.

Safa (1976) says that, although work may bring more independence to women, it has also created a dual burden for many. Working women tend to place their family roles before their job. They continue to be primarily responsible for the care of the home and children, and their job is only another way of helping the family's economy (Blake, 1974; Safa, 1976). According to Safa, industrialization and economic growth in Puerto Rico resulted in the increased participation of women in the labor force. During the early phase of industrialization women were employed at a rate nearly equal to men. In 1970 they constituted 48.6% of the manufacturing labor force. Puerto Rico's industrialization relied on light industry (i.e., textiles and clothing). Women came to provide a cheap labor force (Safa, 1984a). In industries where women predominated, the salary differential between men and women was as high as 30.3%.

The traditional subordination of women limits their autonomy, self-confidence and freedom, reducing them to the

domestic sphere (Safa, 1976 : 81). Extended family systems tend to protect women from the alienation experienced by those in the isolated nuclear family. Their authority is in the home vis-a-vis the children. Particularly, lower class women enjoy a strong sense of solidarity among female kin and neighbors.

Traditional values regulating female behavior are significant barriers to women's participation in the labor force, in politics and in other public spheres (Jacquette, 1976). Harkess (1973) found that traditional ideals among Latin American women are surprisingly persistent, at least in certain aspects of life connected with the family, work, education and politics. Chaney (1979 : 11) concludes that Latin American women will probably not replicate United States or Western European patterns of women's liberation.

Return Migration

Although it is commonly assumed that migrants rarely return to the place of origin, more attention is now given to return migration streams. At the theoretical level, return migration is also linked to economic factors. It has been observed that during periods of recession in a country the rate of immigration declines. At the same time the rate of outmigration tends to increase, and streams of migrants returning to their place of origin is also observed. Studies

show a relationship between employment opportunities at home and rates of return migration (Toren, 1976; Lianos, 1975). Using time series data for various periods since World War II, Lianos found that rates of return from Germany to Greece were related to differences in the index of unemployment. Toren (1976) found that, controlling for socioeconomic status, the decision of the more successful Israeli returnees were primarily influenced by occupational opportunities at home, while the less successful were primarily motivated by patriotic attachments and loyalty of their home country.

While returnees may be attracted to occupational opportunities in their homeland, according to Vanderkamp (1971), they are not influenced in the same way as new migrants are. Noneconomic factors are widely mentioned in return migration literature. In many cases, noneconomic factors are the primary reasons for return. The most frequently cited noneconomic considerations are family related concerns (Perkinson, 1980; Da Vanzo, 1976), such as the desire to be in the company of kin and friends, elderly parents, and so on. Social and cultural advantages are found to outweigh the economic costs.

Other researchers have questioned the importance given to "cultural" variables. Gmelch (1980 : 139) points

out that migration for cultural reasons is unlikely in the poor developing nations where returnees would not find adequate employment and a comfortable standard of living. Only in the hinterlands of industrialized countries are "the economic costs of return small enough to be affordable." The authors suggest a cautious interpretation since the economic dimension may be more important than many returnees are willing to admit.

It is important to note that return migrants are usually acting on better information than "nonreturn", or first time migrants, (Lee, 1966; Miller, 1973). With the exception of those who left at an early age, potential return migrants have more accurate knowledge of their place of origin through contacts with friends and relatives who inform them about the area. Thus, their decision is more informed.

The vast literature on selectivity suggests that migrants are highly motivated people and that, in the short or the long run, they will experience some sort of improvement. However, it has been observed that return migrant streams include successful people as well as individuals that have been "failures" (Jansen, 1970; Perkinson, 1980). Many may have returned because they failed to adjust to the place of destination. In Switzerland, for

example, some Spanish, Portuguese, Yugoslav, and Tunisian farm workers, finding it impossible to adapt to the new environment, returned home within a few days of arrival (Castles and Kosak, 1973). Some migrants return only after realizing that their dreams will not come true. Other return because they intend to do so all along. Brettell (1979) and Rubenstein (1979) observed a strong "return ideology" or intention of returning among the Portuguese in France and among West Indians in England. This is evidenced by, among other things, the remittances sent home while abroad, and by ties migrants maintained with people in their home communities. Rubenstein also observed that West Indians who intended to return maintained close contacts with other West Indians in England. Myers and Masnick (1968) concluded that the stronger the social and psychological ties of Puerto Ricans, the more predisposed they were to return.

Research findings support the idea of migrant selectivity. It has been observed that Puerto Rican migrant characteristics vary with changing socioeconomic conditions, both in Puerto Rico and in the United States. Those that migrated to New York before World War II were mainly skilled and semiskilled urban workers. This contingent was better educated, more regularly employed and better paid than the average person in Puerto Rico (Mills et al., 1950 : 25). When Puerto Rico began to industrialize,

and agricultural production began to decline, there were greater economic incentives for skilled and semiskilled urban dwellers. However, there was little to offer farm workers. Migration thus became an attractive option for this group, specially after migration was facilitated by the low cost of air transportation.

Cintron and Vales (1975) study of 236 migrants 14 years and older who returned to Puerto Rico between 1965 and 1971 found that the present reverse flow was composed of migrants in the 25-44 age group and who had slightly higher education than the nonmigrant population. The researcher also found sex differences in median years of school education: 8.35 for females and 7.4 for males.

Differences in occupational categories have been found in Israel (Toren, 1976) and among black returnees in Southern United States (Campbell, 1974). Campbell found more black return migrants holding white collar jobs (27.8%) as opposed to nonmigrant blacks (20.3%). The author points out that the disproportionate number of returnees in higher occupational categories may be a reflection of the selectivity of the outmigration or, alternatively, due to the skills gained while abroad.

The rate of unemployment among returnees is higher than among nonmigrants. Nevertheless, it has been shown that

unemployment varies inversely with the length of time after return (Cintron and Vales, 1975; Zell, 1973).

Since education and skill levels are indicative of individuals income potential, it is expected that return migrant households' incomes will exceed that of nonmigrants. Yet evidence suggests that this is not always the case. Campbell (1974) observed that 44.7% of black return families had annual incomes of less than $5,000, while 51.3% of nonmigrant families earnings were less than that amount. Perkinson's (1980) study in northeastern planes of North Carolina showed no great differences between the two groups. Moreover, income and earnings of return migrants did not differ significantly from those of new migrants. According to the researcher, this would imply that return migrants were no greater "failures" than new migrants.

The Impact of Return Migration

The impact of return migration on the socioeconomic development of the recipient community has been a subject of debate. The historical-structural perspective provides a framework for analyzing migration at the macrolevel. This approach relates individual migration behavior to the larger social system, a strategy that potentially allows us to determine the impact of migration on both sending and receiving societies.

Remittances sent home by migrants are often regarded as one of the major benefits of migration. It is said that they help to improve the standard of living of the family and/or relatives left behind. There are instances in which the sums of money are considerable. Turkish workers in Germany were sending home an average of U.S.$700 per month in 1963. By 1965, this figure rose to U.S.$28 million per month (cited in Castles and Kosack, 1973). These remittances were presumed to ameliorate the balance of payments and assist industrial development in the sending economy. According to Castles and Kosack, remittances to some Mediterranean countries have been equivalent to a significant proportion of the countries' imports. Remittances, however, have not always been sufficient to change the balance of payment situation. For instance, the Greek balance of payments steadily worsened up to 1965, despite the high level of remittances.

After years residing and working abroad, migrants accumulate sizeable assets that they bring home with them upon their return (Brettell, 1979). They have savings and obtain additional money from the sale of their assets prior to their departure. In addition, depending on the distance and cost of transportation, some bring with them possessions such as furniture and automobiles. Little is known about how much money the average returnee brings home.

How the capital accumulated while abroad is invested is important in determining the economic impact of return migrants upon the community. It is often observed that housing is the most common form of investment (Brettell, 1979; Rhoades, 1977, 1979; Reichert, 1981). Many invest in land (McArthur, 1979; Rhoades, 1979). Investments in rural land often lead to lower agricultural output since land remains out of production, or is used as a place for vacationing. Reduced agricultural production may also result from the fact that returnees are no longer attracted to agriculture or do not find it profitable to engage in agricultural occupations.

The dream of many returnees is to be independent and self-employed. There is evidence from Yugoslavia, Spain, Italy and other places (cited in Gmelch, 1980) that there is a tendency for return migrants to engage in small businesses such as small shops, bars and cafes. Substantial resources are spent on consumer items, to raise the living standard and social status of the individual returnee. By local community standards, it is generally observed that return migrants are better off.

It is evident that return migrants experience some social mobility. They improve their own standard of living

and, at the same time, sending societies acquire foreign currency. But, migration does not seem to bring the expected economic boost (Weist, 1979; Wood, 1982). German employers, for example, recruit the healthiest and most able members of the labor force who are often employed at the time of migration (Gmelch, 1980). A similar situation is observed in other industrial countries where trained and educated individuals are recruited. When workers are no longer productive because of illness, disability or old age they return home. The result is that the cost of maintenance of the labor force is transferred back to the sending society (Portes, 1976).

Return migrants, it is sometimes argued, bring with them skills, capital and experiences that they did not have before. That seems to be true in the case of the returnees from Hawaii to the Phillippines (Griffiths, 1979; McArthur, 1979), from the United States to Italy (Cerasse, 1974) and Mexico (Reichert, 1981), and between European countries. They are even considered to have a "modernizing" effect on their home communities (Guillett, 1976), although the evidence on this point is contradictory. While abroad, migrants usually hold unskilled or semiskilled jobs. Many work in a single industry, such as textiles or fruit picking. Others acquire skills that, once they are home, they have little or

no opportunity to apply (Cerasse, 1974). In general, returnees to developing countries, particularly those returning to rural areas, do not find the infrastructure needed to make use of their skills if any were acquired. The benefit of migration to the sending society, as well as to the individual migrant, can therefore be questioned.

Return migration aggravates the problem of labor absorption. Many areas in Italy (Risoli, 1977) and Mexico (Reichert, 1981) have been incapable of reabsorbing incoming labor force. Reichert found that in Guadalupe, a Mexican town commited to seasonal migration as a way of life, migrant income is the primary source of livelihood for nearly three-fourths of Guadalupe's families. Wage labor in the United States has enabled them to dramatically improve their standard of living and, at the same time, bring advances in the material conditions of the town through better housing and improvements in environmental sanitation, nutrition and health care and other benefits. Seasonal migration has also made it possible for many to remain in Guadalupe where there is a shortage of cultivable land and lack of employment opportunities. Nevertheless, in spite of achievements in per capita income and rates of consumption among migrant families, it has not led to the development of the town's economy in so far as production and new employ-

ment opportunities are concerned. Moreover, the migrant's achieved standard of living can only be maintained through recurrent migration. Due to restrictions in immigration to the United States, a situation has been created in which more individuals emigrate each year as illegal laborers.

The above mentioned study, and others conducted in Central Mexico (cited in Reichert, 1981), suggest that migration, and seasonal migration in particular, provides temporary relief from rural poverty (or poverty in general) through the growth of individual household earnings. At the same time, it fails to produce "the kind of overall structural transformation needed to ensure the long range viability and autonomy of sending societies" (Reichert, 1981 : 64). Similar findings have been reported for various European countries, i.e., Spain, Italy, and Portugal.

Whereas it would be a highly beneficial solution for developing economies if migration were to help sending communities achieve socioeconomic development and growth, the reality is often different. The volume of labor migration is not generally enough to alleviate unemployment and raise wages sufficiently to stimulate growth. On the other hand, if large numbers actually emigrated it might lead to imbalances in the labor market and even to a decline in production since it is often the skilled worker who

migrates. Few get vocational training abroad, and many of those who do receive training are the ones who never return. Others obtain skills that are not useful at home. Remittances and other savings are used mostly in consumption. Few actually invest in industry as most of the capital goes into small and sometimes unproductive businesses (Rhoades, 1979).

Return Migration: Puerto Rico

After World War II, many Puerto Ricans migrated to the United States. Prior to 1960, most of the studies dealing with migration in Puerto Rico were concerned with migration from the island to the United States. Concern with return migration began in the late 1960s after the unexpected stream of migrants returned to Puerto Rico with intentions of staying. Their impact was soon felt.

Between 1940 and 1960 approximately 600,000 people left Puerto Rico to work in the United States (Hernandez-Alvarez, 1967). Push and pull factors are cited as causes of this trend. The more relevant are rapid population growth and high rates of unemployment in Puerto Rico, and more employment opportunities and higher wages in the United States (Maldonado, 1979; Monk and Alexander, 1979; Myers, 1967).

The transformations of Puerto Rico's economy from a poor agricultural society into a highly industrialized

economy has brought social and economic change. Per capita income grew rapidly, and considerable improvements were made in education, housing and quality of life. As a consequence, these changes have been accompanied by dramatic demographic changes.

Johnson (1982) views Puerto Rican migration as an extension of the urbanization process, only played out at a large scale. Hernandez-Alvarez (1976) views return migration as one of the many stages of people who move from (a) birth place to (b) place of residence in the island before migration to (c) U.S. residence to (d) place of return in Puerto Rico. Sometimes there are only three moves, from birthplace to the United States (skipping (b) above) and back to Puerto Rico.

Miller (1973) found that in the United States some of the less prosperous states (West Virginia, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Kentucky) derived a significant fraction of their immigration from the return of those who had once left. Moreover, the higher the rate of emigration a place experienced in the past, the greater the potential for return migration. These findings suggest that, given the high number of Puerto Ricans abroad, the potential for return is also high. The unprecedented reverse trend that began in the late 1960s reached that proportions due to the

volume of past emigration and the subsequent potential for a return stream.

During periods of economic recessions in the United States the rate of migration from Puerto Rico declines and some return migration occurs (Lopez, 1980; Johnson, 1982). During the recessions of 1953-54, 1957-58, and the early and late 1960s, the rate of migration from Puerto Rico to the United States dropped and the number of Puerto Ricans returning to the island increased. According to the censuses, 34,000 returned to the island between 1955 and 1960, and 225,000 between 1965 and 1970. Based on the 1977 Immigration Survey, the Puerto Rican Planning Board (1980) estimated that, of the total of 685,000 immigrants on the island, 495,000 (72%) were returnees and 137,000 (20%) were immigrants of Puerto Rican ancestry. Only 53,000 (8%) were from the United States or other foreign countries.

In addition to those "pushed-out" of the United States for economic reasons, are those who return to the island after retirement and those who return, as Johnson (1982 : 142) put it, "to find their roots." Old age return, or "coming home to die, seems to be a prevailing pattern among Puerto Ricans". Others simply return for family or personal reasons, i.e., illness of a relative, inheritance of property, or spouse's strong feelings about returning.

Those returnees who spent most of their life in the mainland feel foreign in Puerto Rico, particularly as islanders refer to them as "Newyoricans" or "Neoricans". According to Johnson, they experience prejudice just as they did in the barrios of the United States.

Some residential areas in Puerto Rico, particularly around the metropolitan area of San Juan, are increasingly recognized as "Newyorican" enclaves. In places like Levittown in Toa Baja and Santa Juanita in Bayamon, English is spoken by most people in everyday activities and in schools. Also, a "Neorican Society" in San Juan has been created to help newcomers.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH DESIGN

The objectives of this study are (a) to provide a better understanding of the socioeconomic impact of migration and return migration on the migrant household; (b) to generate insights as to the reintegration of the return migrant family in the community of origin; and (c) to provide a better understanding of the socioeconomic impact of return migration on the receiving community.

Source of Data and Unit of Analysis

The return migrant household constitutes our unit of analysis. In demography, "persons living in the same dwelling unit comprise a household, whether they are all related or not." (Burch, 1979). For census enumeration purposes the distinction is made between "household" and "family". "Family" is used to refer only to those kin with whom one co-resides. For the purposes of this study a "household" is defined as a group of individuals who reside together as a single domestic and economic unit. This definition is appropiate to our study because there was no unrelated individuals living in the households in our sample.

The return migrant household is defined as that household in which the head (or person primarily responsible

for the economic welfare) lived in the United States for at at least five years. The definition is restricted to Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico of Puerto Rican parents or mixed parentage who have lived in the United States for at least five years of their lives. Immigrants of Puerto Rican ancestry born abroad were also included in the sample. Most of the households studied consisted of parents with their children, although grandparents or others acting as tutors of a child were included in the sample. Households in which a child or other relative had returned from the United States were not considered.

It is assumed that families with dependent children are those most affected by migration. Therefore, a sample of return migrant families in their childrearing stage is studied. Returnees are compared to a group of families who never lived abroad. The sample of nonmigrant households will be used as a control group in order to study the impact of migration on the return migrant households.

It was not possible to obtain a list of migrants to and from Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans, as United States citizens, have free entry to the United States, hence, no registration system exists of the movement of individuals between the two places. Some information is collected by the Department of Labor and the Office of Social Services related to those return migrants requesting their services.

That information, however, refers to selected members of the population and was not suitable for sampling purposes.

The sample for this study was therefore obtained through schools in Puerto Rico. Families with children under 18 years of age who transferred from the United States to public schools in the Municipio of Mayaguez comprise the universe from which the sample was drawn. Excluded from the sample are families composed of old people, those without children in school and families who left their children in the United States. By selecting migrants through the schools, the universe of returnees was restricted to those households with children.

These criteria were dictated, in part, by practical reasons. Aside from going house to house in the Mayaguez area, the schools seemed to be the only source of information available by which to secure a sample of families comprising different socioeconomic levels. From a substantive standpoint, however, such a limitation may not be serious. Indeed, it can be argued that, since one of the objectives is to study the problems of reintegration, families with children are an important group.

We selected six schools in the Mayaguez urban area on the basis of socioeconomic criteria. They were chosen from a variety of neighborhoods (Balboa, Candelaria, Miradero, Marina, Sabalos and downtown Mayaguez) representing different socioeconomic levels. Due to the Department of Education

restrictions in supplying students' addresses, children of migrants and nonmigrant families were asked to deliver letters to their parents asking parents to collaborate in the study. Of the total 513 letters distributed, 286 or 56% responded. It should be noted that in some cases children may have not delivered the letter as requested. Seventy-nine percent or 226 families (143 return migrant and 83 nonmigrant households), agreed to participate and 21% refused to do so for different reasons. Based on the selection criteria described in this chapter, 120 households (70 return migrants and 50 nonmigrants) were finally interviewed.

The sample selection method is admitedly subject to potential biases caused by the selectivity of those who agreed to participate. In addition, the representativeness of the sample may be questioned due to the fact that it is a nonprobability sample drawn from an unknown universe.

Field Work

The field work for this research consisted of two stages. First, we carried out preliminary interviews in three households to obtain detailed information on the process of their migration and the return. The life histories of these three families revealed relevant issues in the study of migration, and guided the formulation of the

questionnaire (Appendix). The next step consisted of structured interviews among return migrant and nonmigrant households in the sample. The interview was conducted with the head of the household or the spouse.

Analysis of Data and Methodology

Data were gathered for each migrant and nonmigrant household. The following information was recorded: (1) origin of the head of the household; (2) sex of the head of the household; (3) marital status; (4) household size and composition; (5) length of time spent abroad; (6) time spent in Puerto Rico after the last return; (7) education of the head of the household and the spouse; (8) skills of the head of the household and the spouse; (9) occupational mobility; (10) household's annual income; (11) contacts in Puerto Rico and kinship ties; (12) female labor force participation; (13) accumulation of assets; (14) strategies devised in adjusting to the new environment; and, (15) satisfactions perceived by returnees as resulting from living in Puerto Rico.

In adjusting to the new environment, return migrants have had to resort to special arrangements. The questionnaire was designed to identify the character of the strategies (if they exist at all), and to carry out a comparative analysis between migrant and nonmigrant households. We were

particularly interested in determining whether household strategies in coping with inflation and unemployment are common across all households or whether migrants have distinct characteristics. The adjustment of returnees and their families was also studied in terms of satisfactions derived from living in Puerto Rico. The issues addressed included children's adjustment to school and to Puerto Rican society; childrearing convenience; satisfactions in relation to public services on the island (i.e., health facilities, sanitation, transportation, etc.); general attitude toward the return; and intentions of remaining in Puerto Rico.

The impact of migration on the return migrant household is of particular interest to this study of Puerto Rico's return migration. Questionnaire items were designed to define the migrant situation during three stages of the process: pre-migration, while residing abroad and, the returnee's situation on the island. It was assumed that the pre-migration situation was one of response to the social and economic conditions of Puerto Rico at the time migration ocurred (e.g., unemployment, low salaries, very low educational levels). It is expected that, controlling for length of time residing in the United States, the migrant socioeconomic situation improved while residing abroad.

The implications of migration for social mobility is examined by analyzing achievement over time in terms of education, skills, occupation, and material possesions such as capital and property. Female-headed households represent almost one-third of the return migrant sample, suggesting the importance of female headed households to this study. The characteristics of female headed households are presented in the tables along with data on migrant and nonmigrant sample.

Assuming that economic reasons motivated people to migrate, the socioeconomic impact of migration on the return migrant household is examined in terms of the following aspects. First, the proposed objectives and the length of time intended to stay abroad are compared to the the objectives accomplished during the actual time spent abroad. Secondly, general as well as socioeconomic characteristics of return migrants and nonmigrant households, such as age and sex of the head of the household, marital status, education and skills, unemployment and patterns of employment and, occupation and income are compared. An analysis is carried out on the differences of income between the two groups. A Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) is performed to identify the effects of certain household attribute variables on household income levels. The

resulting analysis provided us with income differentials between return migrants and nonmigrants when controlling for the effects of age, sex and education.

In addition, correlation and multiple regression analyses were performed to statistically examine the relationship and significance of selected socioeconomic variables. The correlation coefficient, r, is a measure of the direction and strength of the relationship between two interval variables. This analysis allowed us to select variables according to their statistical significance.

The first step consisted in examining the direction and strength of the relationship between income and selected socioeconomic variables: age of the head of the household; education of the head of the household and the spouse; age at the time that migration occurred; number of years living abroad and time in Puerto Rico after the return, or last return; occupational mobility and; the number of household members employed. These variables were selected based on findings from other studies which indicate their importance in the determination of individual salaries and wages.

On the assumption that a linear relationship exists between variables, the multiple regression analysis provided us with the best linear prediction equation for household income levels. The stepwise selection procedure was used to

ensure that variables were included in the regression equation according to their respective contribution to the explanation of variation in income.

Finally, the accumulation of assets of return migrants and nonmigrants over time, the difficulties experienced by return migrants in readjusting to their homeland after many years of being away, and individual perceptions of the household overall socioeconomic situation are examined in order to assess the benefits of migration after the return and the impact of return migration on Mayaguez.

CHAPTER IV
THE MIGRATION PROCESS

Puerto Rican communities in the United States emerged from early movements of labor prior to, during, and following World War II. Since its beginning, the island's government did not openly encourage nor discourage migration. The government considered its role in the migration process as one of advising potential migrants to facilitate their migration under a system of contract labor (Maldonado, 1979). Agricultural laborers in Arizona, Ohio and other states, and later as industrial workers during the war, were the migrants who established the Puerto Rican communities in the United States.

The migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States presents characteristics of international as well as of internal migration. It is internal in the sense that Puerto Ricans, by virtue of being U.S. citizens, are allowed to freely travel to the mainland without need of a visa. For the same reason they can work without a work permit or "green card". Nevertheless, in the United States Puerto Ricans form an ethnic group with a different language and culture.

Puerto Rican Migration to the United States

The sample of return migrants obtained for this study shows that the majority of these individuals migrated to the United States prior to 1960, with the major exodus (71%) occuring between 1951 and 1960. About one fourth left the island before 1950.

Migrants went to New York City where they had relatives and friends to receive and help them find jobs in the city. The area of major concentration was New York City (72.9%) and surrounding areas (17.1%), followed by other cities in the state of New York (5.7%). Therefore, 95.7% of all migrants in the sample spent most of their stay in the United States in the New York area. Very few (4.3%) tried their fortune in other regions.

Profile of the Migrant

Three-fourths of the return migrants in the sample resided in Mayaguez or a nearby city before departure. Others (18.6%) lived in nonmetropolitan towns or cities. A small number left from the San Juan metropolitan area (1.4%). Ana, one of the return migrants interviewed, recalls she was eight years old when her parents took her and the rest of the children to New York City. Before departure the family was living in the same neighborhood in which they now live, "a little farther, in one of those mountains you see over there." They were very poor and her grandfather had

allowed them to build a small wooden house in his property. Ana reminisced, "My father was 29 years old, married my mother and had four children. He never had a steady job. He used to work as a laborer in a beer factory and in agriculture. When there was nothing to work on he would sell agricultural products on the streets." In 1950 he decided to migrate as contract laborer. He worked very hard in New Jersey for five years. At the end of this period he had not saved any money and very little was left to send to his wife and children in Puerto Rico.

As other studies have shown, the majority of those who migrated in the 1950s were young, poor, unskilled and with only a few years of elementary education (Hernandez-Alvarez, 1976; Lopez, 1980). They were "pushed" by unemployment in the island and "pulled" by the economic opportunities of the time in New York City. This is also true for the migrants in our sample. More than half of the head of the households interviewed left at highly productive ages. This survey found that 57.1% were aged 16-25 (Table 4.1) and 72.8% were in the 16-35 age group.

It is noteworthy that 61% were either unemployed or temporarily employed before departure. Only 34.3% had a full time job. Besides, as many as 69.6% was living in an urban area and 30.4% moved from a rural setting to New York City.

Table 4.1 Age of the Head of the Household at the Time of Migration

Age Group	Percentage (n)
under 15	22.9 (16)
16 - 25	57.1 (40)
26 - 35	15.7 (11)
36 - 45	1.4 (1)
46 - 55	1.4 (1)
over 56	1.4 (1)
Total	100.0 (70)

Mean migration age: 20

When asked the reason(s) motivating their migration, 89.9% expressed economic reasons as important in their decision while 10.1% mentioned personal reasons as more relevant to their final decision to migrate.

Table 4.2 Migration Motive.

Motive	Percent (n)
Economic	89.9 (62)
Personal	10.1 (7)
Total	100.0 (69)

Evidently, this group of migrants is part of that segment of the population that did not benefit from the industrialization process that was going on in their homeland. The decision to migrate was not a pleasant one

for them. First, migration for these people was a condition of survival. Second, migration represented a dream for improving their lot always with the idea of returning to Puerto Rico in the future.

The Migrant in the United States

In New Jersey, Ana's father was tired of being far from the family, concluded that, under the circumstances, the family would remain apart for the rest of their lives. Besides returning to the island, there was the possibility of seeking his brother's help and trying his fortune New York City like many other Puerto Ricans did at the time.

In New York he was unemployed for a while, mainly because he did not know the English language. He started as a welder in a factory a job that he held during his stay in New York, and which he still performs in Puerto Rico.

Meanwhile Ana's mother worked in a cottage industry in Puerto Rico. She, like many housewives of the time, was a mittens seamstress. One day, a year after her husband's departure to New York, she received the money for her trip to New York City. She traveled alone, as the money was enough for just one airplane ticket.

As Ana explained, "My mother worked night and day in factories as a floor girl. My father was also working in different jobs in order to be able to send for the four kids left behind and grandmother." A year after, the remaining

five left. "I was only twelve when I started working in a laundry in Brooklyn. The owner was Cuban and he employed me part-time for cleaning and delivering of clothes in the neighborhood." Her mother continued working and her grandmother took care of the children.

Ana dropped out of school in the 11th grade. She married young and had five children. She worked in a factory for four years, before having most of her children. Her husband, Luis, was taken to New York by his parents when he was only 14 years old. He was excited about dropping out of school and not having to take care of his grandfather's horses anymore. He had heard about making money in the city, but he was too young to work, and had to go to school in New York. He dropped out again when he finished 10th grade.

Luis' first job was as a kitchen helper. Three years later, he obtained a better job, as welder. He was trained on the job and two years later he was laid off. Shortly thereafter, he found another job as operative in a factory. Eight years later was laid off again because the factory moved to another state. Luis was always lucky, and soon found employment as a clerk in a shoe store.

The Return

The intention to return prevailed through the years. However, "We were all happy living in New York until my mother experienced two violent incidents," Ana said. "One

was an attempt and another was an assault in the street." Twelve years after their arrival in New York City, and one month after the last incident, Ana's parents decided to return to Puerto Rico. All they had was $400 in savings and a car that they brought with them to Puerto Rico. All the children were economically independent. Some were already married, and stayed in New York.

Ana's parents were received and helped in the beginning by her father's parents. They bought some wood and constructed a rustic place to live in grandparent's land. But, Ana's mother did not get along with her mother-in-law, and her father was unemployed most of the time. He sold the car and joined a friend to buy a piece of land so they could live apart.

How to build the house? There was no money. "My father took off to New York CIty and my husband helped him find a job in the company he was working." Two years later he returned to the island. With the monthly remittances of these years he had enough to buy the materials for the house that he built, mostly by himself.

Most of the Puerto Rican migrants of the past left with the intention of returning soon, one to three years after. However, as shown in Table 4.3, 98.6% of those in our sample stayed in New York more than eight years, many of

them as long as 30 years and more. The average stay was 18 years.

Table 4.3 Length of Time Spent Abroad, Return Migrants. Percent (n).

Years	Return Migrants Total	Female Heads
5 - 7	1.4 (1)	4.5 (1)
8 - 15	5.6 (31)	50.0 (11)
16 - 30	41.2 (28)	41.0 (9)
more than 30	11.8 (8)	4.5 (1)
Total	100.0 (68)	100.0 (22)

Mean Years Abroad = 18.25.

Ana's brothers and sisters remained in New York and always dreamed of establishing in Puerto Rico close to the rest of the family. Ana's oldest sister has decided to stay in the United States. Her husband was killed a year ago. She wants to stay in the home he bought for them and keep the piece of land they have in the countryside. She has been a housewife all her life and the pension she receives is enough to support her and the three kids.

Puerto Rico's Return Migration

Why do Puerto Rican migrants return to the island? A persistent "return ideology," or intention of returning, has been observed by many researchers (Johnson, 1982; Brettel,

1979; Rubenstein, 1979). Migration out of Puerto Rico seems to be changing from a "safety valve" to population pressure (Myers, 1967) and employment problems (Evans and James,1979; Masnick, 1968) into a boomerang (Bonilla et al, 1979). As researchers have noted, the higher the rate of migration a place experienced in the past, the greater the potential for return migration (Miller, 1973). Other researchers have noted that return migration to the island may be associated with the notion among certain segments of the Puerto Rican population in the United States that "everyone is going back to Puerto Rico "(Hernandez-Alvarez, 1976).

Why Migrants Return

As discussed in Chapter II, return migration is linked to economic as well as noneconomic factors. Do the returnees interviewed for this study belong to the group of those "pushed out" of the United States for economic reasons (Rothenberg, 1977; Vanderkamp, 1971) or, do they return "to find their roots" (Johnson, 1982), for retirement, to die at home or for any other personal (Perkinson, 1980; Da Vanzo, 1976) reasons?

Most migration literature points to economic reasons as the more relevant factor in the movement of people from one place to another. Economic reasons seem to have motivated the migration of Puerto Ricans to New York. It

would be expected that unemployment, cost of living, or a similar economic aspect would be the most important factor motivating the return. Our data question the importance of pure economic factors on the return.

Almost 79% of all household heads were employed (Table 4.4) during the period immediately before the return. Slightly over 90% of the female heads reported that they had jobs prior to leaving New York. Also, ten percent of the household heads were incapacitated or already retired. Apparently, unemployment was not a "push" factor for returning to Puerto Rico.

Even though 11.5% of the heads of household were unemployed inmediately before return, only one returnee said that unemployment was the most important reason for coming home. Evidently, those unemployed expected to find another job if they had stayed in New York. In addition, the spouse was working in 2.9% of the households in which the head was unemployed, which reduces unemployment to 8.6% of households where neither spouse was employed. It is important to note that very often only one member of the family worked on a regular basis. As many as 75.7% of the families had one and 18.6% had two members regularly employed.

Unemployment did not seem to have had a negative impact on the migrants' situation in New York. However, other

economic reasons may have influenced the decision to return since 41.4% reported having received some kind of public aid. The latter indicates that, although they may have been employed, their income was not sufficient and that they needed to depend on public assistance to support the household.

Table 4.4 Employment Status Before Return. Percent (n).

Employment Status	Return Migrants	
	Total	Female Heads
Both head of household and spouse unemployed	8.6 (6)	0
Unemployed head and employed spouse	2.9 (2)	0
Incapacitated or retired	10.0 (7)	9.1 (2)
Head of household employed	78.6 (55)	90.9 (20)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)

A high proportion of returnees expressed fear of the violence in New York (32.9%; Table 4.5) as the reason motivating their decision to return. The second most important reported reason was health problems, such as incapacity, arthritis, alergies, and other weather related illnesses (25.7%), followed by change in marital status, separation, divorce, and widowhood (17.1%).

The majority (83%) of those who reported change in marital status as motivating their return to Puerto Rico

were women. Why did these women choose to return? Probably, they felt the need for financial support and protection, assuming that their relatives on the island could provide the needed support.

Table 4.5 Motive for Return to Puerto Rico. Percent (n).

Motive	Return Migrants	
	Total	Female Heads
Unemployment	1.4 (1)	0
Violence in the U.S	32.9 (23)	27.3 (6)
Change of Marital Status	17.1 (12)	45.5 (10)
Health	25.7 (18)	13.6 (3)
To try living in Puerto Rico	8.6 (6)	9.1 (2)
Achieved what desired	7.1 (5)	0
Family	4.3 (3)	4.5 (1)
Other	2.9 (2)	0
Total	100.0(70)	100.0 (22)

Some return migrant heads returned after having achieved their goal (7.1%). Others were motivated by the desire to live in their homeland (8.6%). None of the female heads of household said that they achieved their goals or desires in the United States.

For many returnees their stay in the United States was longer than expected. "Time was running fast and our children were in the ages 15, 13, 11 and, 9. It was getting late for our intended return," Ana said. Besides the cold weather, that they never liked, they were "worried about

violence and drugs in school and the streets of New York City. We did not want to lose control of our kids." Her sister, according to Ana, waited too long. "When children grow to be teenagers one cannot change things."

In 1976, Mercedes, Ana's sister, made the first attempt to return to Puerto Rico. She sent her three daughters to their grandparents. At the time they were 10, 14, and 15 years old. They disliked Mayaguez and asked their parents to take them back to New York. The family stayed in New York City for three more years.

New York does not seem to be the appropriate place for childrearing, according to Mercedes and Ana. "Can you imagine how parents feel at 2:00 A.M. waiting for their daughter to come in from the New York City streets. "My daughter was pregnant and had to drop out of her third year of nursing school. Thanks God the guy married her," said Mercedes.

In 1982, Mercedes returned again with her second husband and two daughters. Mercedes' husband is a return migrant too, who arrived in New York City at the young age of 16. Like many other migrants, he did different jobs, such as upholstery and packing. He was always employed.

After a short time, one of Mercedes daughters left to live with relatives still in New York City. The youngest is

16 years old now, and is home with her parents. Mercedes resents that her other daughter is not with them in Puerto Rico.

It seems that some returnees experienced difficulties in adjusting to Puerto Rico. This is especially true of those who migrated at an early age. Others could not go back to New York even if they wanted to. Having no other options, they develop strategies in order to better adjust to the new environment. In order to assess the impact of migration on the return migrant household, the next chapter examines the socieconomic characteristics of the returnees studied in Mayaguez.

CHAPTER V
THE RETURN MIGRANT HOUSEHOLD

This chapter deals with the socioeconomic characteristics of Puerto Rican return migrants in Mayaguez. The sample of return migrant families will be compared to a control group of families who have never migrated. Comparatively, skills and educational achievements, occupation and income differentials of the head of the households as well as general characteristics of the families will be studied. The two groups will be examined in order to evaluate the socioeconomic impact of migration and return migration on the migrant and his/her household.

General Characteristics

It is assumed that families with dependent children are those most affected by migration. This study's sample consists of families with school age children transferred from the United States to schools in the Municipio of Mayaguez. The nonmigrant sample includes classmates of the return migrant children.

Age, Sex and Marital Status

Given that the respondents were chosen because they were in the childrearing stage, large differences in ages were not expected among parents. In general, return migrant

heads of household were slightly older. In each sample about one-third were over 45 years old: 35.7% of returnees and 30% of nonmigrants. Half in each sample were in the 35-44 age group. Fewer returnees (14.3%) fell in the younger category, 25-34 years old, compared to nonmigrants (20%).

The data in Table 5.1 show that the majority of return migrants were married, although fewer returnees (62.9%), were married compared to nonmigrants (78%). Also, more returnees live with their partner without being legally married (10% and 4%, respectively). Divorcees, separated and widowers account for 27.1% of returnees, and 18% of nonmigrants. Consequently, more return households had only one person responsible for the wellbeing of the family.

Table 5.1 Marital Status of Return Migrants and Nonmigrants. Percent (n).

Marital Status	Return Migrant	Nonmigrant
Married	62.9 (44)	78.0 (39)
Living together	10.0 (7)	4.0 (2)
Separated	5.7 (4)	2.0 (1)
Widowed	5.7 (4)	4.0 (2)
Divorced	15.7 (11)	12.0 (6)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (50)

More female heads were found among return migrants than among nonmigrant households. Because female-headed

households constitute a relatively large number in the sample, special attention will be given to that group.

Family Size

Return migrant households have an average of 4.5 members. Nonmigrant households appear to be slightly larger, with a mean of 4.9 members. When we look at the distribution of households by family size, as shown in Table 5.2, we observe that return migrant families are relatively large in size; 54.3% of families in our sample have five or more members (three or more children). Fifty-two percent of nonmigrants also have relatively large families.

Table 5.2 Size of Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Households. Percent (n).

Family size	Return Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Headed	Total	Female Headed
Less than 4	45.7 (32)	63.6 (14)	48.0 (24)	75.0 (6)
5 - 6	45.7 (32)	27.3 (6)	34.0 (17)	12.0 (1)
7 or more	8.6 (9)	9.1 (2)	18.0 (9)	12.0 (1)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (50)	100.0 (8)

Unexpectedly, return migrant households headed by a female are larger than female headed nonmigrant households; 36.4% of return female households have five or more members compared to only 25% among the nonmigrant female.

Return families are indeed smaller than a typical Puerto Rican family of 1940s and 1950s. If we use nonmigrant families as a reference, we conclude that migration did not affect the size of the Puerto Rican migrant families significantly.

Socioeconomic Characteristics

Education and Skills

Earlier studies of the selectivity of migrants show higher levels of education for return migrants in Puerto Rico in comparison with the population that never migrated. Cintron and Vales (1975) found higher educational levels among migrants that returned to Puerto Rico between 1965 and 1971 than among nonmigrants. However, an analysis of 1970 census data (Torruellas and Vazquez, 1976) shows that for the population 25 years and over, the mean years of school completed was 8.3 for return migrants and 9.1 for nonmigrants. Our data confirm these findings. The average number of years of school completed for the return migrant household heads in our sample is 8.3, while the measure for nonmigrant heads is somewhat higher, 9.1 years. As shown in Table 5.2, the highest percentage of return heads, both male and female, is found at the intermediate level of education (9th grade completed); for nonmigrants it is high school (12th grade completed).

Table 5.3 Educational Level of Return and Nonmigrant Heads of Household.

Educational Level	Return Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Head	Total	Female Head
Under 5 years of school	24.3 (17)	9.1 (2)	24.0 (12)	12.5 (1)
Elementary of school	18.6 (13)	13.6 (2)	14.0 (7)	12.5 (1)
Intermediate	37.1 (26)	50.0 (11)	18.0 (9)	12.5 (1)
High School	12.9 (9)	18.2 (4)	26.0 (13)	37.5 (3)
University studies with/ without degree	7.1 (5)	9.1 (2)	18.0 (9)	25.0 (2)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (50)	100.0 (18)

Return Migrant mean = 8.3 Nonmigrant mean = 9.1
Return Migrant Mode = 9 Nonmigrant Mode = 12

The return migrant sample is made up of relatively young couples in the childrearing stage of their lives who migrated to New York and lived there more than five years. In terms of education, their achievements are not outstanding when compared to their counterparts who remained on the island. Eighty per cent of return and 56% of nonmigrant heads did not obtain a high school diploma. Forty three per cent of returnees compared to 38% of nonmigrants did not go beyond elementary school (6th grade). Only 20% of return heads completed high school compared to 44% of nonmigrant heads.

About 27% of return female heads completed high school compared to 62.5% of nonmigrant female heads. The highest

proportion of return female heads is found at the intermediate level of education while more nonmigrant female heads have completed high school. An equal proportion of return and nonmigrant heads, females as well, have under five years of schooling.

The educational attainment of returnees may have been affected by the selectivity of the labor market in the United States. Puerto Ricans were attracted to New York by the job opportunities and factory wages in the United States. Between 1947 and early 1960s, factory wages were about triple Puerto Rican levels (Mosher, 1980 : 58). Since the majority of migrants worked in similar jobs there was no need to pursue additional education or to acquire new skills. Similar to other findings, few migrants obtain vocational training abroad (Rhoades, 1979a). Those who do receive training are generally the ones who never return.

Cooney's (1979) analysis of the labor participation of the Puerto Rican females in New York found that Puerto Rican women attained less education than those residing in other states. Also, the women who returned to the island between 1965 and 1970 were better educated and have more work experience than those that stayed in New York. Cooney explains that the loss of less skilled female jobs and the expansion of higher skilled female jobs in New York affected

women and favored native white females, and therefore had an adverse effect on Puerto Rican women. Jobs for females with eight years of schooling or less declined by 40% while jobs for college graduates increased 64% during the 1960 decade (Cooney, 1970 : 292).

Migrants in our sample returned to Puerto Rico after 1966. Almost one-fourth (23%) of them were female heads of household who did not complete high school. Their average level of education was intermediate. Based on Cooney's results we can speculate that these women belonged to that segment of the population left out of the prevailing labor market in New York City.

Aside from the level of education as measured by years of schooling completed, it is useful to compare migrants and nonmigrants in terms of their skills. We found that more return (87.1%) than nonmigrant heads of household (80%) had skills acquired either through formal or informal training, as shown in Table 5.4. Almost one-third (seven out of 22), returnees with formal training reported attending a vocational school in Puerto Rico. Respondents with vocational training either attended a vocational school in order to find the desired job after they returned to Puerto Rico, or left the island as skilled workers. Only three returnees attended vocational schools in the United

States. Almost half of returnees with formal training were females. In terms of skills obtained through vocational schools or on-the-job training, the nonmigrant females were at a disadvantage compared to males. The same conclusions held when we compared female return migrant heads of household.

Table 5.4 Skills of Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Heads of Household. Percent (n).

Skills	Return-Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Head	Total	Female Head
Formal	31.3 (22)	45.5 (10)	30.0 (15)	37.5 (3)
On-the-job training	55.8 (39)	40.9 (9)	50.0 (25)	25.0 (2)
No skills	12.9 (9)	13.6 (3)	20.0 (10)	37.5 (3)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (50)	100.0 (8)

Training on the job is the more common way of obtaining skills. Over half of return migrant heads of household (55.5%), obtained skills at work and in the United States. None reported having obtained skills during jobs held in Puerto Rico. On-the-job training is less common (50%) among nonmigrant heads.

Fewer return migrant heads have no skills (12.9%) compared to nonmigrants (20%). More female heads (37.5%) than return migrant female heads (13.6%) are unskilled.

Therefore, although nonmigrants have more education, many of them may find that they do not have the skills for certain types of jobs. Industrial employers often require the kind of experience that more returnees than nonmigrants may have.

As this discussion emphasizes, employability is associated with the amount of human capital acquired. Yet educational level alone is only a partial measure of human capital investment. Other aspects include the particular skills learned, either through training on the job or through a vocational school. Inasmuch as return migrants and nonmigrants differ in terms of these dimensions, both measures are relevant to our comparative analysis. In the section that follows, we explore the implications of such differences in terms of the occupational distributions of return migrants.

Employment and Occupation

This section examines unemployment among return migrants. Also, it explores patterns of employment among returnees and nonmigrants in terms of the frequency and motives for changing jobs.

As Mercedes explains, "We were uncertain about job opportunities in Puerto Rico." Ana's husband was unemployed for six months after arrival. Mercedes and her husband soon

found jobs. Her husband began as a construction worker, and was laid off one and a half years later. Since then, he has not been able to obtain another full time job. At present, he works from two to four hours a day in a grocery store. Mercedes found a job in an electronic factory soon after she arrived. She started in assembly and was promoted to supervisor. Two years later she was among many to be laid-off.

Unemployment among return migrants parallels that of the island as a whole. In 1981, when this research was done, Puerto Rico's unemployment rate was 22%. As many as 38.5% of return migrant heads were not working for one reason or another. Twenty-one percent were actively looking for employment in the stagnant industrial sector of the island (compared to 12% of nonmigrant heads; Table 5.5). A returnee's situation was aggravated when the spouse was also unemployed. In a few cases, the shared economic responsibility was not possible due to the absence of a spouse in the household.

In almost one-third (31.4%) of the return migrant households a woman is primarily responsible for the economic welfare of the family. Eight of the fifteen unemployed return heads are female. Comparatively, the situation of the nonmigrant female head is less dramatic. Their unemployment rate is lower, they represent two of the eight nonmigrant unemployed heads.

Table 5.5 Employment Status of Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Heads of Household. Percent (n).

Employment Status	Return Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Head	Total	Female Head
Unemployed	21.4 (15)	36.4 (8)	16.0 (8)	25.0 (2)
Employed	61.4 (43)	50.0 (11)	70.0 (35)	50.0 (4)
Incapacitated	7.1 (5)	0	10.0 (5)	12.5 (1)
Retired	5.7 (4)	0	2.0 (1)	0
Other	4.3 (3)	13.6 (3)	2.0 (1)	12.5 (1)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (50)	100.0 (8)

Twenty-nine percent of all of return migrant and nonmigrant household heads interviewed said they were laid off from the last job (Table 5.6), a pattern more common among nonmigrants than return migrants (31.9% and 28.6%, respectively). It should be noted that, even though returnee lay-off figures may include lay-off that occurred in the United States, these instances are rare. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, 78.6% of return migrants were employed in the United States at the time they decided to return to Puerto Rico. These findings are not surprising given the recent employment situation in Puerto Rico. The island's economy relies heavily on foreign industry, much of the investment is from the United States and there is evidence that firms are leaving the island (Safa, 1984b). Industries are moving to foreign countries such as Mexico

and other Central American and Caribbean countries to take advantage of cheap and non-unionized labor. The exodus of manufacturing industries, which is partly responsible for a rise in unemployment, may account for the high proportion of lay-off found here.

Table 5.6 Reason for Last Change in Job, Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Heads of Household. Percent (n).

Reason	Return Migrants		Nonmigrants	
	Total	Female Head	Total	Female Head
Lay-off	28.6 (20)	22.7 (5)	31.9 (15)	25.0 (2)
Obtained a better job	7.1 (12)	4.5 (1)	38.3 (18)	25.0 (2)
Change of residence	31.4 (22)	36.4 (8)	2.1 (1)	0
Resignation	17.1 (12)	36.4 (8)	12.8 (6)	37.5 (3)
Incapacitated or Retired	15.7 (11)	0	14.9 (7)	12.5 (1)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (47)	100.0 (7)

The above findings are confirmed by data on the reasons motivating most changes in jobs among nonmigrants. Information was gathered about jobs held during the head of the household's lifetime, beginning with the current job and going back to the first one. The reasons for leaving each job were recorded in order to explore possible patterns of employment and differences between return migrants and nonmigrants in lifetime employment. The results showed that return migrants held an average of 5.5 jobs compared to 3.16

among nonmigrant heads. Lay-off from the job appeared to be a problem for half (Table 5.7) of the heads of household who never left Puerto Rico. The higher percentage of job changes due to lay-off among nonmigrants is consistent with the information on the slowdown in industrial production in Puerto Rico during the period.

Almost half of the return migrant heads (48.5%) resigned from their previous job. Their resignation was motivated by a change in place of residence (31.4%) or because the returnee decided not to work in that place anymore (17.1%). Most of those who changed employment because they changed place of residence said they resigned from their job in the United States in order to return to Puerto Rico. Therefore, the wish to return and not lay-off motivated their return. Very few cases reported a change in residence after return that forced them to change jobs.

However, change of place of residence was not an important factor in returnee's employment history. Only 18.3% reported change of residence as the common reason for changing jobs. As shown in Tables 5.6 and 5.7, the frequency of job resignation among returnes was higher than among nonmigrants. A pattern of job resignation was not found among nonmigrants. The data seems to indicate that returnees, more than nonmigrants, tend to resign when they are disatisfied with their job or place of work.

5.7 Most Common Reason for Changing Jobs, Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Heads of Household. Percent (n).

Reason	Return Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Head	Total	Female Head
Lay-off	30.0 (18)	6.2 (1)	50.0 (14)	50.0 (1)
Obtained a better job	20.0 (12)	25.0 (4)	46.4 (13)	50.0 (1)
Change of residence	18.3 (11)	18.8 (3)	0	0
Resignation	31.7 (19)	50.0 (8)	3.6 (1)	0
Total	100.0 (60)	100.0 (16)	100.0 (28)	100.0 (2)

Women heads of household do not behave very differently from the return migrant or nonmigrant group they belong to. Seventy-three percent of return migrant women heads resigned from their previous job. Half of those that resigned did so because they changed place of residence, most likely to return to Puerto Rico. Twenty-three percent were laid off from the job. Similarly, 62.5% of nonmigrant women also resigned from the previous job, but more than half of those who resigned did so to take on a better job.

Nonmigrants seem to be more socioeconomically mobile. More nonmigrant heads of household (38.3%) left their previous employment because they obtained a better position somewhere else. Also, even though lay-off from employment is a problem frequently faced by workers in Puerto Rico, a considerable proportion of the nonmigrants in our sample (46.4%) reported that, in their lifetime, changes in jobs

were mostly motivated by a change to a better job. Only 20% of the return migrant heads had the same experience. Moreover, only 7.1% of return migrant heads resigned from their previous job because they obtained a better position somewhere else.

Return migrants show a tendency to change jobs more frequently than nonmigrants. As mentioned before, returnees had an average of five to six jobs and nonmigrants an average of 3. As Table 5.8 shows, 60% of nonmigrant heads had between one and three jobs in their lifetime. The majority (94%) had fewer than six jobs. On the other hand, almost half (48.5%) of returnees has had six or more jobs.

Table 5.8 Lifetime Number of Occupations of Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Heads of Household. Percent (n).

Number of Occupations	Return Migrants	Nonmigrants
0		2.0 (1)
1		20.0 (10)
2	7.1 (5)	14.0 (7)
3	17.1 (12)	26.0 (13)
4	14.3 (10	18.0 (9)
5	12.9 (9)	14.0 (7)
6	15.7 (11)	4.0 (2)
7	15.7 (11)	0
8	10.0 (7)	0
9	2.9 (2)	0
10 or more	4.2 (3)	2.0 (1)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (50)

Return Migrant Mean= 5.54; Mode=3
Nonmigrant Mean= 3.16; Mode=3

Several factors contributed to the differences in employment patterns between return migrants and nonmigrants found here. First of all, the New York area job market offered more employment opportunities to migrants. Secondly, many migrants arrived in the United States already equipped with skills. For instance, many Puerto Rican women that migrated to New York in the 1940, 1950 and 1960 decades had cutting and sewing skills. Therefore, they concentrated in certain type of jobs. In addition, these types of jobs had fewer language requirements, and wages were often lower, reducing competition with native workers (Safa, 1981: 162). These factors facilitated the Puerto Ricans employment in manufacturing.

Occupation

Campbell's study (1974) of blacks returning to the south of the United States points to the disproportionate number of returnees in higher occupational categories in comparison to nonmigrants. This differentiation is explained by the selectivity of the outmigration or by the possibilty of migrants gaining skills while abroad. However, our study found fewer return migrant heads of household in professional, technical and managerial occupations (4.3%, compared to nonmigrant heads, 14.3%)

The majority of the people interviewed, returness as well as nonmigrants, work at the industrial zone in

Mayaguez. The industries located there include apparel manufacturing, the assembly of electronic appliances, and food processing and packing. More return migrant heads of household (61.4%), both male and female, are employed in this kind of activities than nonmigrants (53.1%; Table 5.9). Factory employment is followed by sales and clerical.

Table 5.9 Occupation of Return Migrant and Nonmigranmt Heads of Household. Percent (n).

Occupational Category	Return Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Head	Total	Female Head
Professional, Technician	4.3 (3)	4.5 (1)	14.3 (7)	0
Managers, Sales and Clerical	18.6 (13)	9.1 (2)	10.2 (5)	37.5 (3)
Craftsmen*	61.4 (43)	59.1 (13)	53.1 (26)	25.0 (2)
Laborers	5.7 (4)	0	14.2 (7)	0
Service Workers	4.3 (3)	9.1 (2)	4.1 (2)	12.5 (1)
Housewives	5.7 (4)	18.2 (4)	4.1 (2)	25.0 (2)
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (49)	100.0 (8)

*Factory Workers.

When we look at lower paid occupational categories, we find that 14.2% of nonmigrants hold manual jobs compared to only 5.7% of returnees.

Female return heads of household show a similar pattern to that of male heads. Most hold factory jobs. No female was found in the laborer category but, an equal number of males was found in the laborers category. Nonmigrant females show a different pattern; most hold sales

and clerical jobs, followed by factory jobs and housewives. Minimal differences are observed in the service and housewives category between return and nonmigrant female heads.

Family Income

Poverty level incomes were found among both return and nonmigrants. As shown in Table 5.10, one-third of return migrant (32.8%) and over one fifth of nonmigrant families are below the poverty level in Puerto Rico ($5,900). The percentage of households with incomes under $5,900 is higher among returnees. More returnees have incomes under $3,000 (5.7%) than nonmigrants (2.1%). While they were in the United States, none of the returnees had annual incomes under $3,000. This indicates that returnees have not benefited in economic terms by returning to the island.

Table 5.10 Annual Income of Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Households. Percent (n).

Income ($)	Return Migrant		Nonmigrants	
	Total	Female Headed	Total	Female Headed
1,000 -3,000	5.7 (4)	13.6 (3)	2.1 (1)	0
3,100 -5,900	27.1 (19)	31.8 (7)	20.8 (8)	0
6,000 -8,900	34.3 (24)	41.0 (9)	33.3 (16)	50.0 (3)
9,000-11,900	11.4 (8)	9.1 (2)	20.8 (10)	50.0 (3)
12,000-18,000	15.7 (12)	4.5 (1)	14.6 (7)	0
18,100-25,000	2.9 (2)	0	8.3 (4)	0
Over 25,000	2.9 (2)	0	0	0
Total	100.0 (70)	100.0 (22)	100.0 (48)	100.0 (6)

Return Migrant Households = $8,613
Female Headed Households = $6,573
Nonmigrant Households = $8,908
Female Headed Households = $8,850

A high percentage of female-headed return households show poverty-level incomes. Poor households headed by women constitute 14.3% of the 34.3% return migrant households with incomes under $5,900.

As expected, the percentage of households diminishes at higher income levels. However, fewer returnees (32.9%) have incomes over $9,000 per year compared to nonmigrants. There are no female-headed households at higher income levels. Only 13.6% of return female-headed households have yearly salaries over $9,000. Half of the nonmigrant female heads have incomes between $9,000 and $11,900. Most receive less than $12,000.

Puerto Rican women often return to the island because of the difficulties of finding employment and suitable child care (Alcalay, 1984). Most of the females in our sample (about 75% of 38 respondents) reported they had to pay either a sitter or relative for child care, when they worked in the United States. In about 10% of the cases some relative or neighbor would help for free. Four percent said that their children were old enough or that older children would take care of younger ones after school.

Cooney (1979 : 294) found that those females who returned to Puerto Rico between 1965 and 1970 were better educated and had more work experience than those who stayed

in New York. If the return females interviewed in Mayaguez in this study belong to that group the selectivity, Cooney notes, did not help them improve their socioeconomic condition, as documented by the employment and income data presented above. As Safa (1984a) indicates, female unemployment has increased in an era of growing unemployment and economic crisis. As mentioned before, the recession of the garment industry in Puerto Rico in the 1970s is partly due to the competition from cheaper wages in Asia, Latin America and other Caribbean islands. However, according to Safa, women have been less affected than men by the growing unemployment because the jobs women hold have suffered less than male blue collar jobs.

The present economic situation in Puerto Rico is reflected by the number of households that depend, one way or another, on government funds to support or supplement income. The growing unemployment, the decline of the industrial sector, and low wages have made Puerto Rican economy heavily dependent on social security, veterans benefits, unemployment compensation and food checks. It is estimated that about 70% percent of the Puerto Rican population received food checks (Safa, 1984a : 1173) in 1977. That year, this program alone cost the United States government $802.1 million.

Almost half of all the families interviewed in this study received food checks at the time of the survey. We also found that more return migrants benefit from the Welfare Program (18.6%; Table 5.11) and subsidies for rent of home (11.1%) than nonmigrant households. Return female-headed households make use of all kinds of public aid. None of the nonmigrant female-headed households was receiving aid from the Welfare Program at the time of the interview.

5.11 Economic Support Received by Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Households. Percent (n).

Economic Support	Return Migrant		Nonmigrant	
	Total	Female Headed	Total	Female Headed
Food Checks	47.1 (33)	50.0 (11)	42.0 (21)	37.5 (3)
Subsidy for rent of home	15.7 (11)	27.3 (6)	4.0 (2)	12.5 (1)
Welfare Program	18.6 (13)	18.2 (4)	8.0 (4)	0
Social Security	17.1 (12)	22.7 (5)	12.0 (6)	37.5 (3)
Alimony	1.4 (1)	13.6 (3)	0	50.0 (4)

Very few return female-headed households receive economic support from alimony. However, fifty per cent of all nonmigrant female-headed households receive alimony. We could argue that, in most cases, their ex-partners are still in the United States and that the distance makes it easier for them to avoid responsibilities. In such cases, it is more difficult and costly for women to file claims for alimony in the courts of the United States.

As mentioned before, Mercedes' husband has been working on a part time basis for a year and a half. How much do they make for a living? Mercedes receives $86.00 per month from unemployment compensation and her husband earns about $40.00 biweekly. Mercedes explains that they survive with this income because they do not pay rent for the tiny apartment nor do they pay for utilities. Her parents pay for these expenses. Also, Mercedes brought furniture and some electric appliances with them from New York. However, they doubt they can stay long in Puerto Rico given the present economic situation and the poor perspectives of improvement, according to Mercedes.

Ana and her husband have decided to stay in Puerto Rico. "We will survive one way or another", Ana said. Ana's husband was unemployed for six months after arrival. He then found a job as salesman in a shoe store. He did not like the company and after eighteen months he resigned. He found a similar job soon after he resigned. For the last three years he has been working for the same company. He earns $536 per month. "Our economic situation was good because I was earning $576 per month as floor lady in an electronic factory," said Ana. She was laid-off a year ago, and is waiting to be called to work again. "If I get the job back or not will not influence our decision of staying in Puerto Rico. We belong here," Ana said.

Income Differentials

A Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) was performed to identify the effects of certain household attribute variables on family income levels. The MCA table presents deviations from the overall mean income as a result of being a migrant or nonmigrant. The MCA analysis permits us to statistically remove the effects of other variables, such as education and sex of the head of the household, in order to examine the differences in annual incomes between return migrant and nonmnigrant households.

The MCA results presented in Table 5.12 show that the return migrant family income is $295 below the nonmigrant. When the level of education and sex of the head of the household were taken into consideration the differences in income almost doubled. Return migrant families showed incomes $581 over that of nonmigrants. However, the income differential between nonmigrant and return migrant heads of household is not statistically significant. The difference we find may therefore be due to chance.

The lower portion of Table 5.12 shows income differentials by the sex of the household. As expected, the income of households headed by females is below the income of households headed by males. The unadjusted deviations show that female-headed households have icomes that are

$2,291 below that of males. Those differences substantially increase when we account for migration status and education of the household head. As shown on the right hand side of Table 5.12, the net difference is $3,482, which is statistically significant. The relationship between the variables in this analysis is somewhat strong (R = 0.46). The R2 (0.21) indicates that this model explains 21% of the variation in income levels between migrants and nonmigrants.

Table.5.12 Multiple Classification Analysis: Differences in Annual Family Income, Return Migrants and Nonmigrants, By Sex, Controlling for Education of the Head of the Household.

Variables and Category	N	Unadjusted Dev'n	Eta	Adjusted for independents and covariates Dev'n	Sig.*
Return Migrant	70	-120		236	Not Sig.
Nonmigrant	48	175		-345	
Male	90	544		826	Sig.
Female	28	-1747		-2656	

Multiple R = 0.46
R2 = 0.21
Grand Mean = $8,733

* Significant at 0.05 or less

The Relationship Between Income and Selected Socioeconomic Characteristics of Return Migrant Households

This section will statistically examine the significance of selected socioeconomic variables and their power to predict income levels. As a first step, a correlation analysis was performed in order to examine the direction and the strength of the relationship between income and selected socioeconomic variables.

Education of the head of the household and the spouse was selected because of the importance attached to these variables in the determination of individual salaries and wages. The age at the time of migration and the length of residence in the United States were included to examine the influence of the migration experience on the income of return migrant families.

As expected, the number of household members employed showed a positive and the highest correlation with family income ($r = 0.58$; Table 5.13). Education of the head of the household showed the second highest correlation ($R = 0.37$). All other variables appeared to be less strongly correlated to family income.

On the assumption that a linear relationship exists between variables, a multiple regression analysis was performed to find the best linear prediction equation. All

of the above variables were included. The stepwise selection procedure was used to ensure that variables were included in the regression equation according to their respective contribution to the explanation of variation in income.

Table 5.13 Correlation Between Income and Selected Socioeconomic Variables.

Variable	r
Age of Head of Household	-0.09
Education of Head of Household	0.37
Education of Spouse	-0.18
Years abroad	0.04
Number of jobs	-0.00
Members employed	0.58
Year of return	-0.21
Migration Age	-0.19

Three of the above variables met the stepwise entry criteria (Table 5.14). The regression equations obtained were the following:

$Y = 1,387 + 4,029X1 + 322X2 + 79X3$ (Unstandardized)

$Y = .56X1 + .23X2 + .17X3$ (Standardized)

where: X1 = Number of family members employed

X2 = Education of the Head of Household

X3 = Length of residence in the United States

Starting at $1,387 annual family income we can expect a $4,029 increase for each additional family member working, and a $322 increase for each year of education and

a $79 increase for every year of residence abroad. This model explains 42% of the variation in annual family income.

Table 5.14 Summary Statistics: Dependent Variable Income.

Independent	B	Beta	T	Sig. T
Employed Family Family Members	4029.0	0.64	6.64	0.00
Education of Head Household	322.1	0.23	3.11	0.00
Length of U.S. Residence	79.1	0.17	2.34	0.02
Constant	1387.0		1.30	0.19

Multiple R = 0.65
R2 = 0.42
n = 118

F = 27.35
Sig. F = 0.00

Based on the statistical analysis presented above the household's economic situation depends, of course, on employment opportunities and is tied to the number of household members working, specifically, the spouse employment. Only 17.1% of return migrant households had two members employed. None had more than two. Their situation in the United States was, probably, better because in 19% of the households the spouse was regularly working. Also, the temporary and part time employment of the spouse were common among migrants as a strategy to obtain additional income when needed.

The standardized regression equation better represents the differences we want to emphasize. The Beta coefficients are comparable because the Beta values are indicated in terms of standard units. Hence, we can compare the relative impact of different variables, such as education or length of residence, even though the variables are in different units of measure. On the basis of the results shown in Table 5.14 we conclude that the most important predictor of household income is the number of family members in the workplace. The second most important predictor is the education of the household head, followed by length of residence in the United States. Although the effect is rather small, these results suggest that the greater the number of years in the United States the higher the average household income in Puerto Rico at the time of the interview.

This chapter presented a detailed analysis of the return migrants and their households and how they compare to those that never migrated. Next chapter will examine the return migrant household in terms of their adjustment to Puerto Rico and the impact of return migration on the household economy and the receiving community.

CHAPTER VI
ASSESSING THE BENEFITS OF MIGRATION AFTER THE RETURN

This chapter further examines socioeconomic characteristics of return migrant households in order to assess the impact of migration and the return on the families studied and on the receiving community. Remittances to Puerto Rico while in the United States, the plans for return and assets of return migrants will be discussed in an attempt to determine their impact in Mayaguez. Returnees are expected to experience difficulties as they reintegrate into the new environment. Therefore, another objective of this study is to explore the adjustment process of the resturnees and their families. This is done by analyzing how returnees cope with the household economic situation, and by investigating children´s integration to school and the satisfactions they derive from living in Puerto Rico. Finally, we will explore people´s general attitude towards the return, and their intentions of remaining in Puerto Rico.

As indicated in Chapter III, most Puerto Rican migrants left with the intention of returning within a short period of time. Most of them stayed an average of 18 years.

Yet, interviews with returnees such as Mercedes and Ana, show persistent they were in their intention to return regardless of the time spent abroad. A strong "return ideology" was observed.

Remittances

Findings from other studies show that remittances sent home by migrants while abroad evidence the intention of returning (Brettel, 1979; Rubenstein, 1979). This study found that few returnees (Table 6.1) send money or periodic remittances to Puerto Rico (24.1% sent under $500 per year; 10% sent between $501 and $2,000 and; 4.3% reported sending somewhat over $2,000). Only 10% said they send money to the island with the intention of investing in Puerto Rico. Most returnees would spare some money (an average of $370 per year) in order to help relatives in Puerto Rico.

Table 6.1 Return Migrant Remittances Sent to Puerto Rico by Purpose. Percent (n).

As economic help to relatives	32.9 (23)
For investment	10.0 (7)
As economic help to relatives and investment	2.9 (2)
No remittances	54.3 (38)
	100.0 (70)

The mean yearly remittances was $374 per year. The correlation table below (Table 6.2) shows no strong

relationship between remittances and selected variables. A negative correlation between yearly remittances and the age at migration was found. Those returnees that migrated at young ages sent higher amounts than those who migrated at older ages.

The positive correlation with the present age of the returnee indicates that those that migrated as adults sent some funds to the island. However, as we discussed before, low amounts were sent and they were sent mainly to support the family and relatives (23 out of 32 cases) left behind in Puerto Rico.

Table 6.2 Zero order Correlation: Remittances and Selected Socioeconomic Variables.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Remittances	1.00				
2. Age	0.08	1.00			
3. Migration Age	-0.03	0.68*	1.00		
4. Length of U.S.Residence	0.27*	0.34*	-0.38*	1.00	
5. Lifetime Jobs	0.07	0.34	-0.13	0.10	1.00

Sig. at 0.05 or less.

The variables measuring the number of years in the United States and the migration age are negatively correlated (r = - 0.38). Returnees who migrated older had a shorter stay in the United States. Similarly, those that migrated younger lived longer in the United States. The

remittances of those that migrated younger and stayed abroad longer were higher than the remittances of those that migrated older and for a shorter period of time. A positive correlation is also observed between the amount of yearly remittances and the number of jobs held by the returnees.

Assets of Return Migrants in Puerto Rico

After years of residing abroad, migrants are expected to accumulate material possessions that they bring home with them upon return. They have savings and obtain additional money from the sale of their belongings. Depending on the distance and cost of transportation, some return migrants bring other possessions such as furniture and automobiles. The section that follows examines how much savings returnees accumulated by the time of their return. We will also examine how they use these savings.

Savings

This study found that, despite the distance between New York and Puerto Rico, returning families tend to bring some possessions acquired during their stay in the United States. As shown in Table 6.3, about 71% of returnees incurred moving expenses. The mean cost of moving expenses found was $1,038. Some (18.8%) incurred expenses over $1.100. About one-fourth did not incur any moving costs beyond the airplane tickets.

Table 6.3 Moving Expenses of Return Migrants. Percent (n).

No expenses	26.1 (18)
$ 100 - $ 500	23.2 (16)
$ 600 - $1,100	31.9 (22)
$1,100 - $2,500	14.5 (10)
$3,000 - $7,700	4.3 (3)
	100.0 (69)

Mean Moving Expenses: $1,038.

Little is known about how much money the average returnee brings home and how savings are invested. It was found that returnees did not invest in tools with the intention of starting business or some income generating activity in Puerto Rico. Those that invested their resources (10%) spent between $200 and $2,800. Moreover, 44.3% of return migrant families did not bring savings with them, or brought and an amount (under $500) that was not enough to support them more than a month. Almost one-fourth (24.3%) brought enough funds to get them to Mayaguez. Once in Mayaguez, their relatives supported them until they found employment. A few (14.3%) brought enough to get to Mayaguez and help them for a couple of months. If these people found a job within a month, they probably settled dowm with the help and economic support from relatives on the island. Approximately one-fourth of return families

brought savings between $1,100 and $5,100. Only 11.4% brought more than $5,100. The latter, if they found employment soon, probably suffer little economic hardship during the settlement period.

Property Ownership

No major differences were found between return migrant and nonmigrant's investments. Only 17.1% of returnees and 14% of nonmigrants owned a business. Thus, 82.9% of returnees did not invest funds derived from their migration experience. Sixty percent did not even own a home (27% of which were female-headed families). More nonmigrants owned homes (56%) compared to returnees (40%; 4% of which were female-headed households). Most returnees rented home space (41.4%). Others lived in property owned by relatives and did not pay rent (14.3%; half of them were female-headed households), or lived in public housing (2.9%).

About 40% of returnees owned some property (e.g., homes, business) in Puerto Rico. Fifty-four percent of nonmigrants also owned property. The mean value of property owned by return migrants was $41,893; nonmigrants owned property worth $31,693, a difference of $10,263. It was also found that, compared to nonmigrants (2%), more return migrant families (14.3%) owned property valued at more than $60,000.

It is important to know where the funds invested by returnees in Puerto Rico came from. Half of the returnees reported their investments were the product of savings during the time they were abroad. While in the United States, 30% saved a sufficient amount for the downpayment on a home. The remaining 20% either inherited (6.7%) or obtained a home from savings, mortgage, etc. (13.3%) after arrival in Puerto Rico. On the other hand, nonmigrants investments came mainly from savings and mortgages (78.6%). Inheritance was higher among nonmigrants (21.4%) than among returnees (6.7%).

Mayaguez has not received great economic benefit in terms of cash remittances sent by Puerto Ricans while in the United States, nor through the investments of those that returned to Mayaguez. However, most of the return migrants interviewed (94.3%) maintained ties with people in their home community, mainly with relatives. Only a few (5.7%) reported having no contacts with people in the island during the years of U.S. residence. Thus, the personal contacts people maintain may be more indicative of a migrant's intentions of future return than remittances.

The Adjustment of Return Migrants

Reasons other than economic ones seemed to attract Puerto Rican migrants back to the island. Seventy-one per-

cent of the returnees interviewed said that the sociocultural environment (36.2%) and a more secure personal life (34.8%) are the two major factors that made Puerto Rico more attractive to returnees. Environmental conditions such as climate and less pollution were mentioned by 26.1% of returnees as aspects that attracted them to the island. As said before, 25.7% of the head of households interviewed reported that the return was motivated by illness. Many of them believe that environmental conditions in Puerto Rico, particularly the weather, were beneficial for their health.

The section that follows examines how the household economy and the children education have been affected by the return to Puerto Rico.

The Impact of Return Migration on the Household Economy

Most return migrant and nonmigrant heads of household were concerned about the high cost of living, particularly the price of food. Among nonmigrants the major concern was the cost of housing, electricity and water.

Both returnees and nonmigrants said they have had to resort to measures to cope with the high cost of living in Puerto Rico. Strategies involved savings from spending less on food and recreation. Home-based economic activities to reduce costs in food and clothing were also established, specially among nonmigrants (Table 6.4).

In order to save money, the majority of housholds shop for food where prices are lower for certain items. Eighty-six percent of return migrant and 60% of nonmigrant families said they buy the cheapest brands for certain products. The second most common strategy devised by both groups is limiting recreational activities (59% and 23%).

According to the respondents, perishable products are the more expensive, therefore, about one-forth of households have resorted to gardening, fishing and/or raising animals, which they find rewarding after being "far from earth" in New York City. In addition, they make a lot of their clothing as well as house decorations, i.e., drapperies, table clothes and crafts, at home. Twenty one percent of nonmigrants use this same strategy to save their budget.

Table 6.4 Strategies Devised by Return Migrant and Nonmigrant Families to Cope with the Household's Economic Situation. Percent (n).

Strategy	Return Migrant	Nonmigrant
Change in diet.	86.0 (60)	60.0 (42)
Reduce recreation	59.0 (41)	23.0 (16)
Making clothes,gardening, fishing, raising animals	24.0 (17)	21.0 (15)
Hold an extra job	17.0 (12)	1.4 (1)
Wife work	16.0 (11)	16.0 (8)
Move with relatives	13.0 (9)	18.0 (9)
Start a small business at home	9.0 (6)	20.0 (10)
Renting part of home	4.0 (3)	0
Buy wholesale	7.0 (5)	8.0 (4)
Nothing	4.0 (3)	6.0 (3)

The fourth more common strategy among return migrant households is holding an extra job on a part time basis, followed by wife's employment. However, more nonmigrants (20%) seem to be more business oriented: their fourth more common strategy was to establish a small business at home (i.e., bakery, convenience store or sale of products from their garden). Only 9% of return migrant families did the same. Other strategies included buying wholesale, and renting part of the house to generate some income.

Children's Adaptation to Schools

Staff members of schools with bilingual programs and return migrant children were interviewed to gather general information of their opinion on these programs. Return migrant students described bilingual program as poor. Students claim that returnees are not treated as bilingual but as slow learners, and that they are assigned to groups with students with learning problems. Return migrant children further complained that teachers' spoken English is poor.

School staff expressed concern about the "Newyoricans" in the public schools. According to school staff, this "Newyorican" element brings too much freedom among youngsters in schools and contributes to the drug problem among adolescents. Staff members also claim that "Newyoricans" are more disrespectful of adult authority.

According to information provided by parents, 25.9% of families felt that return migration had a negative effect on their children's grades, that their grades were higher in the United States. On the other hand, half of those interviewed reported that children's grades in school were not affected much after the return and that grades were maintained at the same level. Surprisingly, 22.4% said that their children improved their grades since they returned to Puerto Rico. Even though migration implies a change, at least in language, about 75% of the children seemed to have been able to go through the transition period and keep up their usual school performance or perhaps gaining from the change. However, migration meant a loss for one-fourth of the households. Similarly, 75% of parents expressed satisfaction with the school system in Puerto Rico, but 42.2% of them evaluated it as inferior compared to the U.S. educational system.

Return migrant students feel they do not have support from schools authoriries. According to the students, school authorities do not understand the things they have to go through in the different cultural environment. "Newyoricans" tend to form peer groups that are constantly criticized by school authorities and considered a main obstacle in the learning process. Evidently, there is a great deal of

misunderstanding between students and public school officials, which is reflected in the inadequacy of the bilingual programs and lack of biculturally trained staff.

Parents were asked for recommendations to improve the educational system related to return migrant students . They were concerned about the present economic situation in Puerto Rico and how it affects public services. Shortage of funds are threatening the remedial programs for returnees. Even though returnees speak some Spanish, they need re-enforcement to be able to continue their education in Puerto Rico. Also, according to return migrant parents and students, more bilingual teachers are needed In addition, they said, greater understanding and less discrimination on the part of some teachers would make the transition smoother.

And, Back to New York

Ana and Mercedes were visited again, in a neighborhood about three and a half miles from downtown Mayaguez. Two houses share the same entrance and front yard. Ana and her family own one, the other belongs to her parents. Three related families share the same piece of land. At the time of the first interview Mercedes was living in the small apartment underneath her parent´s home.

Two months later, Ana and her mother lamented Mercedes´ departure. "They are in New York City, closer to

their loved ones." Mercedes had written and informed that her husband was working and that she was still looking for employment. They also said that their return to the island will be better planned next time.

Despite the uncertainty many returnees experience upon arrival, and the fact that 21.4% thought their overall situation in the island had worsen, only 5.7% of the families reported on-going plans of migrating again to the United States. Seventy-three per cent were already established in a home where they intend to stay. The remaining 20% was still trying to settle down in the Mayaguez area.

The Impact of Migration on Mayaguez

After many years of being away return migrants are expected to experience difficulties in readjusting to their homeland. The return migrant has special needs for which receiving societies are usually unprepared, specially when large numbers return within a short period of time. Returnees experience economic instability. Difficulties in adjusting to the new sociocultural environment may have an impact on family stability. Children have special needs. Cultural differences arise from being reared or having spent formative years abroad. Also, a new language or a language defficiency may constitute a barrier that may retard adjustment to the new place.

Returnees were not able to save enough capital during the migration period and arrived in Puerto Rico hoping that relatives would help them until they re-located in Mayaguez. The savings they brought with them were not enough to cover living expenses during the unemployment period. The socio-economic impact of return migrants on Mayaguez and, probably to Puerto Rico in general, is negative in terms of fostering socioeconomic development.

The influx of migrants to a already heavily populated island with a staggering economy has made it more difficult to absorb the labor supply. The demand for public services has increased as has the demand for additional schools for children. There has also been a greater demand for public funds to aid the poor.

CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study evaluated the socioeconomic impact of migration and return migration on the migrant household. To this end, we analyzed socioeconomic characteristics of return migrant heads of households and their households as well.

The head of the household and/or the spouse were interviewed using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to gather quantitative and qualitative information regarding three stages of the migration process: pre-migration, residing abroad, and the returnee's situation in Puerto Rico. Cross-tabulations and statistical analyses were performed to assess the implications of migration for social mobility. In addition, we explored the adjustment of returnees to their homeland, and how they cope with the new environment. The impact of return migration to Mayaguez was briefly discussed.

The historical-structural framework for the study of population movements could be applied to the Puerto Rican migration. Mass migration movements of Puerto Ricans occured at the time when the island was changing from an agricultural society into a highly industrialized economy,

heavily dependent on foreign capital. Migration played an important role in disposing of those left out of the labor market under the new economic system.

The migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States alleviated to some degree the urban overcrowding resulting from the rural to urban movements of people looking for better paying jobs in the city. Even though there was no migration policy, the government of Puerto Rico played an important role in the migration process. The government neither encouraged nor discouraged migration to the United States. The government nonetheless facilitated the process by advising potential migrants of the contract labor system available at the time.

The socioeconomic situation in Puerto Rico and the job opportunities and the relatively high factory wages in New York City combined to make migration an attractive option for many. Migration would allow migrants to save money in order to return to Puerto Rico in a near future. Most of the migrants left with the intention of returning soon, one to three years later. However, the average stay for those in our sample was 18 years.

As other studies on the selectivity of migrants have shown, the majority of migrants in our sample were young, averaging 19 years of age, and left Puerto Rico at a highly

productive age. Most were also poor and unskilled suggesting that they were "pushed" by unemployment in Puerto Rico. Therefore, we may argue that the "pull" factors in New York were only attractive because of the economic hardship in Puerto Rico.

In New York City migrants worked long hours. Many did not learn the English language well or did not learn it at all. Those that migrated as children went to school and learned English. Some dropped out of school to take on jobs to help the family. Their stay in New York was longer than they planned.

Most migration literature points to economic factors as the most important reason for migration. Our study found that economic reasons motivated the migration of Puerto Ricans to New York. However, the data presented here question the importance of economic factors, at least for those returnees in our sample. Seventy-nine percent of all the heads of households interviewed were employed during the period immediate before return, and reported that unemployment was not a problem for them in the United States.

About one-third of the return migrant households in our sample were headed by a female. Forty-five percent of all women heads reported that the change in marital status (mostly separation and divorce) motivated their return to

Puerto Rico. It should be noted that, even though economic hardship may have motivated their return, this situation occurred at a personal level and, probably, had little to do with the economic situation in the United States. Female heads felt that the relatives on the island could provide the much needed support.

A high proportion of returnees (58.6%) expressed fear of the violence in New York and health problems as the main reasons for returning. A few (15.7%) said that they returned after they achieved their goals and/or because they wanted to live in Puerto Rico.

The return migrant sample was compared to a sample of families who never lived abroad. The latter sample was used as control group in order to study the impact of migration on the return migrant houshold. We found that the return migrant household was slightly larger than the nonmigrant household. We conclude that migration did not affect the size of the Puerto Rican migrant families significantly.

The return migrant sample is made up of relatively young couples in the childrearing stage of their lives who migrated to New York and lived there five or more years. In terms of education their achievements were not outstanding when compared to their counterparts who remained in the island. The mean years of school completed was lower for

returnees (8.3) than for nonmigrants (9.1). These findings are similar to Torruellas and Vazquez's (1981) analysis of 1970 census data. Only 20% of return migrants completed high school compared to 44% of nonmigrant heads. Almost one-fourth of them were female heads. Probably, these females were affected by the industry changes in New York City. They belonged to that segment of the population left out of the prevailing labor market.

Also, we found that more returnees (87.1%) acquired skills through formal or informal (on-the-job) training. One-third of the returnees with formal training attended a vocational school in Puerto Rico, half of them were females, which indicates that they either attended a vocational school in order to find the desired job after they returned to Puerto Rico, or left the island as skilled workers. Only three return heads of household attended vocational schools in the United States. On-the-job training was found more frequently among returnees. Slightly over half of those with skills obtained them at work in the United States. Fewer return migrant heads have no skills at all (12.9%) compared to nonmigrants (20%). One-third of those with no skills were women heads of household.

The educational attainment of returnees may have been affected by the selectivity of the labor market in the

United States. They worked mostly in factories and did not pursue additional education. Although nonmigrants have more education, the skills of returnees may be considered an asset. Industrial employers in Puerto Rico often require the kind of experience that more returnees than nonmigrants may have.

The analysis of patterns of employment in terms of frequency and motives for changing jobs showed that the return household heads had more jobs (an average of 5.5) in their lifetime compared to nonmigrant heads (3.2). Return migrants tend to change jobs more frequently through resignation which indicates that returnees, more than nonmigrants, resign when they are disatisfied with their job or place of work. The lay-off pattern found among nonmigrants is a reflection of the slowdown in the industrial sector in Puerto Rico. Also, we found that nonmigrants are more socioeconomic mobile as they change jobs more frequently to move to a better position. Women heads of household do not behave very different from the return migrant and nonmigrant group they belong to.

In 1981, when this research was done, Puerto Rico's unemployment rate was 22%. Twenty-two percent of the return household heads in our sample was actively looking for employment compared to 12% of nonmigrants. The household's

economic situation was reflected in the number of households depending, in one way or another, on government funds to support or supplement the household's income. Almost half of the return migrant households studied were receiving food checks. The growing unemployment, the decline in the industrial sector and low wages have made Puerto Rican economy heavily dependent on unemployement compensation, subsidy for home rent and food checks. It is estimated that in 1977, 70% of the Puerto Rican population received food checks (Safa, 1984a : 1173). This program is costly to the United States and the Puerto Rican people.

In general, return migrants showed slightly lower annual family incomes. Female-headed households are the most disadvantaged of all. The higher educational levels among nonmigrants contribute to their slightly higher income. The multiple regression analyses performed showed that the household economic situation, depends on employment opportunities, and is tied to the number of household members working, specifically the spouse's employment. The next most important predictor was education. The length of the residence abroad was statistically significant in explaining income levels.

Unemployment among return migrants was lower in the United States compared to their situation in Puerto Rico

when interviewed. In about 20% of the households the spouse was employed on a regular basis. In addition, there were more opportunities for part-time or occasional employment. We conclude that their situation was better in the United States.

Remittances sent by migrants while abroad, and the material possessions and savings that returnees brought with them upon return are often regarded as one of the major benefits of migration. Remittances are said to help improve the standard of living of the family and/or relatives left behind and, in some cases, make significant contributions to the homeland economy. The migrants in our sample expected to be independent and self-employed when they returned to Puerto Rico. The resources accumulated while abroad were expected to raise their standard of living and social status, at least by local standards.

We found that those returnees that migrated at a younger age sent higher amounts of money to Puerto Rico than those that migrated at older ages. Younger migrants sent money to help the family (parents, brothers and sisters) in Puerto Rico. In the case of the older ones, they migrated as a household. Generally, the family left together or the head of the household left first, and the remaining family members followed within a short period of time.

Few returnees sent substantial sums of money and many did not send even periodic remittances (54.3% sent no remittances and 24.1% sent under $500 per year). An average of $370 per year was sent to help relatives in Puerto Rico. Unlike other studies, remmittances sent by our sample of return migrants did not evidence the intention to return. Nevertheless, we conclude that most returnees did not earn enough in the United States to allow for savings and/or remittances that would evidence a well planned return.

Mayaguez has not benefited economically in terms of cash remittances of migrants, nor through the investments of the returnees. The mean value of the property owned by the returnees is $41,893 compared to $51,900 among nonmigranmts. Sixty percent of the returnees interviewed do not own a home (compared to 44% of nonmigrants). Most returnees rent the place where they live (41.4). Half of those are female headed households. Others (17.2%) live in property owned by relatives and did not pay rent, or live in public housing. About 16% of returnees received rent subsidies.

The net emigration trend experienced by Puerto Rico since the beginning of this century was reversed in the mid-1960s when immigration to the island surpassed emigration. During the 1970-74 period a new trend emerged with net immigration of 120,000. Between 1975 and 1980, net

immigration declined to 16,292. Some return migrants went back to the United States. Probably, those interviewed for this study are not representative of the broader return migrant flow, but belong to a return migrant segment with certain characteristics. Therefore, the time in which this research was done may account for the differences in characteristics between our sample and others found in earlier studies of return migrants in Puerto Rico (Cintron and Vales, 1975; Hernandez-Alvarez, 1976) and other studies of return migration. Moreover, it should be emphasized that our study was limited to families in childrearing stage who established in Mayaguez. It did not include returnees from the San Juan metropolitan area or other regions of the island.

The return migrant has special needs for which receiving societies are usually unprepared, especially when large numbers return within a short period of time. We found that children of return migrants reared in New York have difficulties in adjusting to the new sociocultural environment. A new language or a language deficiency constituted a barrier to the learning process. Data on the children of return migrants document the difficulties many children confront in the school system in Puerto Rico.

Our sample indicates that these return migrants belong to the segment of the population left out of the changes that were taking place in Puerto Rico as a result of the new socioeconomic development plan. After their return, migrants found that the same industrial system that motivated their migration from the island provided equally limited opportunities when they returned home. The price they had to pay was high. Given Puerto Rico's present economic situation, the future of these returnees and others who intend to return, is uncertain.

Half of the return migrants interviewed saw some benefits to being on the island. They described their overall situation as "slightly better" (25.7%), "better in some respects" (17.1%) or, "about the same as in New York" (7.1%). However, one fifth of them said that they were unhappy with their move back to Puerto Rico. They feel that their standard of living has gone down and do not perceive any benefits. They evaluate their overall situation in the island as "worse in comparison to New York." Finaly, the remaining 28.6% consider that their families are much better-off in Puerto Rico.

APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

Fecha

Nombre del Entrevistado

Direccion

Numero de Telefono

Parte I

Sexo del Jefe del Hogar (JH)

Edad del Jefe del Hogar ____. Edad del Conyugue (Cg.)__.

Lugar de Nacimiento del JH:
Lugar de Nacimiento del Cg.:

Decendencia del JH

Estado Civil

Numero de Personas Viviendo en el Hogar____. Para cada miembro, indique:

- Parentesco con el JH
- Sexo
- Edad
- Lugar de Nacimiento
- Ocupacion
- Empleado o Desempleado

Si ha recibido algun tipo de adiestramiento, asistio a alguna escuela vocacional? Que adiestramiento y donde lo recibio?

- JH:
- Cg.:

Habla ingles: Bien_____; Poco_____; Nada____.

Si el JH esta desempleado, esta buscando empleo?
Si Cg. esta desempleada, esta buscando empleo?

Digame todos los empleos que usted (JH) y su conyugue hayan tenido empezando con su empleo presente. Indique periodos en

que estuvo desempleado.
Razon para dejar el empleo:
1. "laid-off"
2. obtuve otro empleo mejor
3. me mude del lugar
4. Renuncie
5. Incapacidad

Ocupacion	Tiempo de empleo	Lugar (pais/estado)	Razon para dejarlo	Salario

Algun miembro de su hogar recibe ayuda economica de parientes que estan en E.U.____; en otro lugar____.
Parentesco con el JH:
Ocupacion de la persona que hace los envios:
Ultimo envio: $
Frecuencia de los envios:
Cantidad promedio que envia: mensual ____; anual____.

Algun miembro del hogar recibe:
___Seguro Social
___"Food checks"
____Bienestar Publico (Welfare)
____Pension alimenticia o "Alimony"
____Algun tipo de asistencia publica no mencionado arriba, especifique:

Ingreso familiar: mensual____; anual_____.

El lugar donde vive (residencia) es:
___propio, cual es el valor estimado de la propiedad ___.
hipoteca o pagado:
___parcela
___alquiler
___vivienda publica
___propiedad de familiares y no paga
___otro, especifique.

Compro o heredo las propiedades, o parte de ellas, que usted posee:

Valor de la propiedad:

Recibe ingresos provenientes de:
___renta de casas
___renta de tierras
___negocios, especifique el tipo de negocios.

Tiene empleados en su(s) negocio(s)_____; cuantos empleados tiene:_____.

Donde adquirio el dinero que invirtio en su negocio o casa:
___de los ahorros mientras estaba en E.U.: todo lo invertido____; elpronto solamente____.
____prestamo adquirido en banco u otra institucion comercial.
____prestamo de familiares
____otro, especifique:

En su casa tiene:
___T.V.: color ____; b/n____
___stereo o tocadiscos
___lavadora de ropa
____secadora
____telefono
____vehiculo para uso familiar: cuantos___
otros vehiculos:_____
___aire acondicionado

Cuantos de sus vehiculos utiliza como instrumento de trabajo:____.

Si ambos padres trabajan, quien cuida los ninos mientras ustedes trabajan:

Que piensa de la crianza de sus hijos en Puerto Rico, ustedes estan satisfechos criando sus hijos aqui en la isla?

Que sociedad encuentra mejor para la crianza de sus hijos:
Puerto Rico___; E.U.____; otra____: lugar____ .
Explique
No se___.

Como es el progreso de los ninos en la escuela?
Bien____; Satisfactorio___; Insatisfactorio___.
Migrantes solamente:
___las notas escolares son, mas o menos, igual aqui que en E.U.
___tienen notas mas bajas en P.R. que en E.U.
___tienen notas mas altas en P.R. que en E.U.
___fracasados.

Tiene alguna sugerencia encuanto a como el Departamento de Instruccion de Puerto Rico podria ayudar a estudiantes (o sus hijos) provenientes de E.U.:

A sus hijos les gusta P.R.:
Ellos piensan que se vive bien en P.R.:
Donde, segun ellos, prefieren vivir:

Planea mudarse de esta residencia:
Si es asi, donde piensa ir?
___a otra casa en Mayaguez, especifique___
___a otra ciudad o pueblo en P.R., especifique___
___a E.U., que lugar_____
___otro, especifique____

Cual considera usted es la principal necesidad (o problema) de su familia:

Otras necesidades o problemas:

Que ha hecho usted(es) para mejorar la situacion o resolver el (los) problema(s)?

Diria que su familia tiene problemas economicos?

Que estrategias usa generalmente para compensar la inflacion y/o la necesidad de mas dinero:

Ademas de las mencionadas por usted, ha tenido su familia que recurrir a alguna de las siguientes:
___tener un trabajo extra: a tiempo completo___; a tiempo parcial___
___cg. obligada a trabajar, de lo contrario no trabajaria.
___otro(s) miembro(s) del hogar ha(n) tenido que trabajar.
___comenzar negocio en el hogar (reposteria, artesanias, etc.) especifique:
___rentar parte de la vivienda.
___mudarse a vivir con familiares.
___reducir actividades recreativas.
___cambiar dieta alimenticia por alimentos menos caros, etc.
___otros:

Si el Cg. trabaja o ha trabajado alguna vez fuera del hogar, la razon es o fue:
___para sostener la familia
___para ayudar a sostener la familia
___para generar algun dinero extra
___para salir de la casa

Parte II

A migrantes solamente.

Antes de migrar a E.U., donde vivia: Municipio_____; Area urbana/rural_____.

Ano en que salio por primera vez y edad de entonces:
JH:
Cg.:

Cuando se fue, tenia la intencion de regresar a P.R.: no estaba seguro_____; si____; no____.

Cuanto tiempo penso que le tomaria alcanzar su(s) objetivo(s)?

Por que decidio migrar a E.U.?
JH:
Cg.:

Estaba empleado antes de migrar: a tiempo completo o parcial?
JH:
Cg.:

Indique el lugar (estado/ciudad) donde vivio la mayor parte de su tiempo en Estados Unidos _____.

Estaba desempleado inmediatamente antes de regresar de E. U. a P.R.?
JH:
Cg.:

Cuantos miembros del hogar trabajaban regularmente en E.U.___.

Ingreso familiar antes de regresar a P.R.:_____.

Recibia su familia ayuda de: Seguro Social___; "Food checks"___; Welfare_____; Alimony _____; otra, especifique_____.

Si ambos padres trabajaban, quien cuidaba de los ninos?

Cuanto tiempo vivio en E.U.? anos____ y meses____.

Enviaba dinero a P.R. por alguna razon:
cantidad____, enviaba a_____, proposito_____.

Mientras vivia en E.U., mantenia contactos con familiares___; amistades_____ en P.R. por medio de cartas, targetas, llamadas telefonicas o visitas a la isla.

Ano en que regreso para quedarse_____.

Motivo(s) que tuvo para regresar (en orden de importancia):

Diria usted que su sueno (a realizarse en E.U.) se hizo realidad? Si___; no____; parcialmente___.

Regreso porque:
___Conseguimos lo que queriamos alla. Indique lo que querian:
___Tuvimos que regresar, porque:
___Decidimos regresar porque:

Si el JH es mujer, su cambio en estado civil fue la razon o tuvo que ver con su decision de regresar?

Porque decidio regresar a P.R. y no a otro lugar, por ejemplo, otro estado de E.U.?

Cree que la experiencia obtenida de empleos en E.U. le ha sido util en P.R.:
JH:
Cg.:

Cantidad de dinero que tenia cuando regreso a P.R.____.

En que invirtio o como gasto ese dinero?

Trajo algun tipo de equipo o instrumentos con la idea de comenzar un negocio en la isla? Si afirmativo, cuanto invirtio en el mismo?

Con el ingreso familiar presente, piensa que puede mantener su familia y vivir, por lo menos a un nivel similar al que tenian en E.U.?

Si han tenido ciertas limitaciones, especifique:

Que considera usted es mejor aqui en P.R. comparado con E.U.?

Por que vinieron especificamente a Mayaguez y no a otro lugar en la isla?

Cuando llegaron a P.R., recibieron ayuda economica___,y/o otra____de parte de familiares? Explique.

Anticipaba que sus familiares le ayudarian como lo hicieron?

Conserva amistades de antes de migrar a E.U.?

Han hecho nuevas amistades desde que regresaron? pocas___; muchas___; ninguna____.

Diria que a pesar de todas las inconveniencias de mudarse y establecerse otra vez en P.R., su familia se encuentra:

___mucho mejor en P.R.
___un poco mejor en P.R.
___igual que en E.U.
___peor

Ha considerado regresar a E.U. recientemente? Si afirmativo, a donde iria?

Quien esta mas deseoso de regresar a E.U., JH____;Cg._____.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lydia E. Medrano was born September 10, 1947, in New York City and grew up in San German, Puerto Rico. After receiving her B.A. in social sciences from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez, she spent several years in El Salvador. Lydia then decided to continue her studies in sociology. In 1980 she earned the M.A. degree from the University of Florida, Department of Sociology, and a Certificate in Latin American Studies. She continued her studies entering the Ph.D. program in the same Department.

Since graduating from the University of Puerto Rico, Lydia has acquired experience in college level teaching and working overseas. She held a Teaching Assistant position at the University of Florida. She also held the position of Instructor of Sociology at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico in San German and at the University of Puerto Rico at the Mayaguez Campus. For the last three years, Lydia has been Assistant Regional Director at the Latin American Regional Office of Family Planning International Assistance, the international branch of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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